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This Supplement consists of a FULL Report, specially drawn up for "India," of the Debates on Indian subjects in both Houses of Parliament, and questions put on such subjects and the answers given to them, arranged chronologically, from April 26th to May 20th.

Imperial Parliament.

April 26th.

HOUSE OF COMMONS.

PETITION.

State of Kythal,—Petition from Balham, for enquiry; to lie upon the Table.

REGULAR AND ELDERS' WIDOWS' FUND.

The following resolution was reported to the House and agreed to:

"That it is expedient to authorise the Secretary of State in Council of India to contribute, out of the revenues of India, such sums as may be required to meet certain liabilities under any Act of the present Session to make provision for the transfer of the assets, liabilities and management of the Regular Widows' Fund and of the Elders' Widows' Fund to the Secretary of State in Council of India."

The Regular and Elders' Widows' Funds Bill was then considered in Committee (Mr. J. Grant Lawson in the Chair), reported without amendment, read a third time and passed.

EAST INDIA COMPANY'S OFFICERS' SUPERANNUATION.

The following Resolution was reported to the House and agreed to:

"That it is expedient to authorise the charge on the revenues of India of any addition to the Superannuation or Retiring Allowances, which may become payable under any Act of the present Session to remove doubts as to the power of the Secretary of State in Council of India to grant Superannuation and Compensation Allowances in certain cases to officers on his establishment."

The East India Company's Officers' Superannuation Bill was then considered in Committee, and reported without Amendment.

April 27th.

HOUSE OF COMMONS.

THE OFFICERS OF THE GENERAL LIST.

Mr. HEYWOOD JOHNSTONE rose to call attention to the grievance of the officers of the General List (Indian Army) in the matter of their pensions, and to move: "That a Select Committee be appointed to inquire into the grievances of the officers on the general list of the Indian army in the matter of their succession to colonels' allowances, and to report to the House thereon." He pointed out that the officers felt that they had a real grievance to complain of, and that there was no tribunal to which they could appeal except the House of Commons. He could not conceive why it was that the Government, who were so ready to refer every controversial question to the consideration of a Committee or a Royal Commission, should have hesitated to refer this matter to a Committee. The Government had been very prolific in appointing Committees and Royal Commissions. These officers felt that they had a legitimate grievance, and the question was of serious importance to them, because it represented a loss of something like £400 a year. They claimed that they were entitled to colonels' allowances. It was felt by them also to be a hardship that officers who were their juniors in the service should have the advantage of the privileges which were denied to them. One case had been brought to his notice in which an officer who had served in command of a regiment did not receive his colonel's allowance, while his second in command, and actually his junior in entering the service, did. These were officers who joined the service between 1859 and 1861 and were nominated under the old conditions of things by the directors of the East India Company. Everyone joined under the same conditions as the officers of the East India Company's service. They were appointed by the directors; they paid their passage out to India, and they had to this day to subscribe to the old East India Company's funds, established for the relief of the widows and orphans. At the time when these officers were nominated their future position was uncertain. The Mutiny was scarcely at an end, and there was a question in the minds of the authorities at home as to what would be the future of the East India Company's service. When nominated, each officer was asked to sign a paper which contained, among other questions: "Have you been informed that all the appointments now made are to be subject to any alterations that may be decided on?" He thought the last words were of considerable importance in estimating the position of the officers at the present day. What was the position of affairs at that time? First, considerable variations had been introduced in the wording of that question from time to time when it came under the consideration of the India Office. It stood there simply "subject to any alteration that may be decided on," but the India Office, in considering these claims, had more than once altered the phraseology, turning the question into one asking these gentlemen if they accepted their appointments "subject to any alteration which may be subsequently made in the condition of their service." The explanation was perfectly plain and simple. It was to be found in a dispatch written by the Secretary of State for India to the Viceroy on September 30th, 1859, in which a communication was made in reference to the probability of some change being made in the constitution of the Indian army. It was decided in December following by the Government that all future appointments

should be made "subject to any alteration that may be decided on." This showed the reason and the intention of putting the question to those gentlemen who had been appointed. A Royal Commission was sitting at that time to decide on the future position of the officers, and on what lines the Indian forces should be reorganised. He contended that the words "decided on" imported a conclusion of the matter at the moment under consideration. It was not subject to any alteration hereafter: it was subject to any alteration which might be decided on. He suggested that the House must lay weight on the word "decided," and the answer to that was to be found in the Royal Commission which was sitting to decide on the future of the Indian army. The Henley Clause gave particular privileges and rights to those who had served in the forces of the East India Company; but, while the officers did not base their claim on that clause, or on the fact that as cadets they were appointed as officers of the East India Company, they did base their case on the fact that they were officers of the Indian army. The Henley Clause stated (21 and 22 Vic. c. 106, 1858) that the officers were "to be entitled to the like pay, pension allowances and privileges, and the like advantages as regards promotion and otherwise as if they had continued in the service of the Company." Then, according to section 57 of the same clause, it was "lawful for her Majesty, by Order in Council, to alter or regulate the terms and conditions of service under which persons hereafter entering her Majesty's Indian forces shall be commissioned." Any Order in Council was to be laid before Parliament; but he had searched, and he did not believe any such Order could be found which purported to alter the conditions of the service under which these gentlemen joined. They were officers of the Indian army, and as such were entitled to those rights and privileges which had since been taken away. There was a distinction between the Honourable East India Company's Service and the Indian Army. A great deal of the confusion which had attended the consideration of this particular question was due to the fact that no sufficient distinction had been drawn between the officers of the East India Company's Service and those who belonged to the Indian Army. The officers for whom he was speaking claimed—and claimed rightly—to be officers of the Indian Army. That they were entitled to that position was made sufficiently clear by the Governor-General's Order of 1861. When these officers arrived in India the condition of things was an uncertain one. It was not known what their future was to be. But the result of this Royal Commission was practically that the Indian Army was split up into three divisions. There was the local list, comprising those who opted to serve in the local forces in India; there was the general list, comprising those who volunteered for the general service of the Crown; and there was the Staff Corps, created for the first time, of which every officer who had since joined the Indian Army had been a member. All the officers who belonged to the East India Company's Service were given the right of choosing to which of these services they would belong. The Governor-General's Order, No. 960, of 1861, said: "According to the declaration made by these young officers, they have no choice, but the option may be given them, in common with other young officers of the Indian Army, to volunteer for general or local service or for Staff Corps." He laid stress on the words "in common with other young officers of the Indian Army," because those words clearly indicated that they were officers of the Indian Army, and this option was given to them in common with other young officers of the Indian Army, to volunteer for general or local service or for the Staff Corps. They volunteered for the local service. In a despatch dated July 31, 1862, Sir Charles Wood, the then Secretary of State, dealt with the whole question. Apparently the Government of Bombay had recommended that each Lieutenant-Colonel should be promoted to a colonelcy, and receive a colonel's allowance after the expiration of ten years. Sir C. Wood decided that, "All officers who may have held the rank of lieut.-colonel on January 1, 1862, will also be entitled to promotion to the superior grade of colonel, with colonel's allowances, if the step come to them in the ordinary course, before the completion of 12 years' service as lieut.-colonel; but when these lieut.-colonels have been removed from the lists the promotion of those whose Commissions bear date on January 1, 1862, or subsequently, will only be made, as in the Staff Corps, after 12 years' service in that grade." Here it was clearly laid down that those officers who attained the rank of lieut.-colonel after January 1st, 1862, would be entitled to a colonel's allowances after 12 years' service as lieut.-colonel. In this despatch Sir C. Wood also said: "The principle upon which the succession to colonel's allowances of officers of the Indian army who have not joined the Staff Corps or the new Line Regiments is to be hereafter regulated, is to be considered as determined by this arrangement." Here, then, they had this 12 years' arrangement clearly laid down, and it was expressly stated that the principle upon which the succession of these gentlemen to colonels' allowances was to be regulated was to be considered as determined by this arrangement. He did not know whether the India Office proposed to rest their case upon the ground that these gentleman were not officers of the Indian army. If that was their intention he would refer them to the official Army List for this year, where they would find the names of these gentlemen under the head of "Indian Army, General List." The next dispatch to which he would call attention was the dispatch of June 17, 1864, written by Sir C. Wood to the Governor-General of India. It began by saying that "it was also considered desirable, on general grounds, to remove, as far as possible, all distinctions between the officers of her Majesty's general and Indian armies, and to form them prospectively into one united body, retaining for the Indian officers in the meantime such advantages as were peculiar to their service." Here it should be observed the distinction was drawn between the Indian officers and the general officers, in other words, between those on the local list and those on the general list. The distinction drawn was not between officers of the East India Company and the officers of the "Indian Army." Sir C. Wood went on to say: "It might perhaps have prevented a good deal of misunderstanding if the measures for these various objects, which were distinct in themselves, had been undertaken separately, but so much was inevitable, and it was so desirable that the full extent of any changes should be known at once, and that men's minds should not be left in uncertainty as to their future condition, that it was determined to carry into effect, without loss of time, all the measures required for the changes which were to be made." Those were grave and serious words, and the men who read that dispatch, and determined their future careers on the wording of that dispatch were entitled to rely upon it. In view of that declaration, it passed belief that in 1882 a new and further change would be made wholly to their disadvantage. In the 19th paragraph of the dispatch the Secretary of State said: "It appears that of the officers of the Indian army who joined the line regiments the whole of the artillery and engineers, and those who joined the staff corps, have been generally benefited by the change." Then came the words: "If to this number be added the whole of the officers who entered the Service since 1858 on conditions subject to any change that might be introduced into the service, it will be seen that there will remain a comparatively small number who can have any real cause of complaint," showing clearly that these officers (for there were no others to whom this description would apply) were to be "benefited by the change." A subsequent paragraph of the dispatch ran: "The general promotion of the Indian officers will be accelerated, and to every officer, including the cadet who entered the service so lately as December, 1861, his promotion through every grade, with the pay thereunto belonging, as if the whole native army of India had been kept up, is assured, and his right to Indian pension is maintained." These extracts showed what assurances were given to the officers on the general list of the Indian army, to whom alone they were applicable. In another paragraph these words occurred: "Nor is it probable that more than a very few cases can occur in which an officer will not attain the colonel's allowance after a shorter total period of service, even though he may remain rather longer in the grade of lieut.-colonel." Then the 81st paragraph stated: "With this measure the arrangements as regards the officers of the Indian army will be closed. The advantages which have been conferred upon the majority of those officers have already been pointed out, and it cannot be doubted that under the system now established the officers of the Indian army will, for the most part, attain to the several regimental grades, including that of colonel, with colonel's allowance, in a shorter period of service than they would have done had the several staff corps not been formed and had no change in the constitution of the Indian army taken place."

He did not think a more explicit pledge could be given to any body of men than that which was given in the despatch of 1864 from which he had read. That that was the view taken by the right hon. gentleman the member for Wolverhampton was clear from an answer the right hon. gentleman gave to a question put by Sir Richard Temple in 1895 on this subject. The right hon. gentleman said: "The passage in the order of 1864 refers to the prospects of promotion and pension under the rules then in force, including the succession to the colonel's allowance; but as regards the officers who entered the service since 1858, this promise is subject to any change that might be introduced into the service." The House would see that the right hon. gentleman distinctly called it a promise—(hear, hear)—a promise that these officers should have the right of succession to the colonel's allowance after twelve years' service as lieut.-colonel. He now came to the last Act. The House would hardly believe that eighteen years afterwards, in 1882, although in the meanwhile entrance into the staff corps had been closed to these gentlemen, entrance into which would have secured to them this allowance, they were told that, instead of getting their rights after they had served twelve years as lieut.-colonel, they were to be put on a pension of £750 a year, which meant a clear and absolute loss to them of nearly £400 a year. Thus, these particular gentlemen had been singled out from among all those serving in Her Majesty's Indian army for this treatment. After relying on the promise given in the despatch of 1864, and after having done good service for Her Majesty, they were told that, instead of being entitled after twelve years' service as lieut.-colonel to the colonel's allowance, they were reduced to a pension of £750 a year, and were told to be thankful for that. He need hardly say that he had no personal interest in the case of these gentlemen. (Hear, hear.) He had taken it up as a matter of duty. He had been exercised in his mind to see what possible answer could be made to the claims of these gentlemen. Of course, he was well aware that the Government had always the power to deal with those in their service as they pleased; but power was one thing and right was another—(hear, hear)—and he did not propose to discuss the question from the basis of what it was in the power of the Government to do, but from the basis of what was the right and honest thing to do. He believed that considerable reliance was placed on the declaration which these gentlemen had signed, but there could be no question that all the subsequent alterations and emendations did not exist in the original answer received. Then, again, the question had sometimes been raised that these gentlemen were not officers in the Indian army, but to this day their names appeared in the official Army List as such, so that ground of objection disappeared. Again, it had sometimes been repeated in the voluminous correspondence on the subject that these officers were better off than they might have expected to be; but they had not got what had been promised to them, and they were not so well off as they had a right to expect. The probability of succession to the colonel's allowance had been considered by a Committee, whose finding was embodied in a despatch, and he found that that Committee reported that the twelve years' term was two years in excess of the fair term, the average of which had been a little over ten years; so that these officers might fairly have expected to get their colonel's allowance after ten years' service as lieut.-colonel. (Hear, hear.) Then, finally, they were told that the assurance given in the despatch of 1864 had been fulfilled. These gentlemen would not be asking the House to consider their case that day if that assurance had been fulfilled, and he believed it would pass the ingenuity of the noble lord to make out that it had been fulfilled in any shape or form. (Hear, hear.) He had not elaborated the case as he might have done. He had felt it his duty to put it as shortly, and he hoped as intelligibly, as he possibly could before the House. What he was asking for was not a decision of the House on the claims of these gentlemen, but that they might be referred to the impartial judgment of a Select Committee, and he failed to see why her Majesty's Government should refuse that. The Government seemed to have made it a Goverment matter, and had issued a Whip of four lines against it. He had always thought that there was a lack of the sense of proportion in those who were responsible for Government Whips. A Whip of three lines only was issued on the Necessitous Board Schools Bill, and that showed the comparative importance which the Government attached to a measure like that, and the investigation of the conduct of a department of the Government for which they themselves, as a Government, could not be in any shape or form responsible. (Hear, hear.) The Government had shut the door against anything like enquiry into this question, and had made it a Government matter. There was a passage in Macaulay's Essay on Lord Clive to the effect that the strength and foundation of British rule in India was that the Sepoy, however humble and poor he might be, felt that under the rule of the Company his bread and salt were assured to him, however long he might live. If that was so with the Indian soldier, should it be less so with the English officer, who had led him in many hard-fought and difficult engagements? (Hear, hear.) That was the view taken in early days under the Honourable East India Company, and now it was found in contrast to that that no enquiry could be made into the manner in which the India Office from time to time had treated these men who had served them so well. He could imagine but one thing more damaging to a Government than an accusation that they had treated harshly and unfairly those who had done good service in years past. (Hear, hear.) To such an accusation any Government might be exposed, and no harm was done; but when those who had an opportunity of having such an accusation honestly and fairly enquired into turned away from it and endeavoured by all the means at the disposal of a Government to shut the door against enquiry into it, only one conclusion could be drawn. (Hear, hear.) He felt that this ought never to have been made a Government matter. He felt that these gentlemen had a strong and legitimate grievance, and he would, therefore, conclude by moving the resolution which stood in his name. (Hear, hear.)

Sir SEYMOUR KING, in seconding the resolution, asked for the indulgence of the House if he traversed over again some of the ground covered by his hon. friend; but this grievance of officers in the general list was so intricate in itself, and depended so much on the interpretations of warrants and dispatches, that he was bound to trespass on the patience of the House to a certain extent, and to ask for the indulgence hon. members were always ready to give. The right hon. gentleman the member for Cambridge University, who dealt with this matter as Under-Secretary for India on a former occasion, stated, in opening the case for the Government, that he believed the subject was one which hardly anyone understood, and which no one could solve. He could only say for himself that for years he had studied this question, and the more he studied it the more difficult and the less clear it seemed. He agreed with his hon. friend that it was next to impossible to thoroughly make the subject clear to members of the House except through the medium of a Select Committee. That was why they appealed for a Select Committee. He knew his noble friend would say that he was quite able to put before the House how they ought to vote on this question, but all he could say to his noble friend and the House was this—if they could make out a *prima facie* case for an enquiry, they were entitled to it. (Hear, hear.) He thought that his hon. friend had made out such a case. Now, what would his noble friend say? He would say that he was advised by his departmental advisers that these gentlemen had no case; but most people who had gone into the facts, as he had conscientiously done, were convinced that they had an excellent case. He thought that that was the interpretation placed on these warrants and despatches. Of course, he did not blame his noble friend for the attitude which he assumed; he was more or less at the mercy of his military advisers, but if his noble friend said that he was only taking the same view which had been taken by every other Secretary of State, he could only reply that that was one more reason why they should come to that House. What was the good of arraigning the officials before the Secretary of State? Why, his noble friend was their mere mouthpiece in that House. He said, on behalf of those whose cause he advocated, that they were willing to trust the House of Commons, and if it was satisfied, after enquiry, that they had no case, they would abide by that decision. As matters stood, the only appeal they had was to people who had already prejudged their claims. He had, as he said—and the House would believe him—gone very carefully and honestly into the facts, and he had endeavoured to understand this question, and, looking at it impartially, he had come to the conclusion that there was a legitimate claim on the Indian Government. These officers had rendered their services when India was passing through its most critical moments, and now these allowances were not to be granted. The hon. member proceeded to read a number

of extracts from orders and despatches bearing on the claims of the officers, and urged that the whole circumstances called for investigation. Certainly, those gentlemen were no more entitled to the privilege than the gentlemen whose case he was advocating to-day. There was only one more extract he would quote, and that was from the statement of the Military Secretary. That official said: "The general list officers were appointed to the Indian Army subject to any alterations in the conditions of service which might hereafter be determined on." He asked hon. members to mark the wording of that sentence —"the conditions of service which might hereafter be determined on." As his hon. friend had pointed out, there was not one syllable about "hereafter" in the original. What was said in the dispatch confirming the form of declaration was that they were to be subject to any alteration in the conditions of the service, meaning, of course, the whole Indian army, and meaning the alterations then being considered by the Royal Commission sitting on the reorganisation of the army. In 1858 the exact wording was: "All future appointments of cadets should be made subject to any alteration that may be decided upon." Why? Because a Royal Commission was sitting. What alterations were contemplated? Alterations suggested by the Royal Commission. When, therefore, the cadets agreed to abide by any alterations that might be decided upon, it was quite clear they agreed only to the alterations to be made by the Royal Commission. Yet it was now pretended that this "declaration," this agreement, not only debarred the general list officers from the advantages which the General Order of 1864 "assured" and "maintained" to them in common with all officers of the Indian army, but bound them to accept "any alterations in the conditions of service which might thereafter be determined upon." The words of the General Order of 1864, which was an honest and straightforward document, described the general list officers as officers who entered the service on "conditions subject to any change that might be introduced into the service." It did not say "might or may hereafter be introduced." Such were the weapons which the India Office placed in his noble friend's hands, and he had no doubt the noble lord would make the best use of them. He dared say the noble lord would trot out again the question of expense, but he would undertake to prove, if a commission were appointed, that the expense would be very small indeed. Of course, his noble friend would trot out numerous figures to contradict him, but that, again, would be obvious proof that this was not the place to decide such a question. It was not across the floor of the House of Commons that this question could be settled. What was wanted was some small independent tribunal. He could not understand why his noble friend resisted the suggestion made, unless there was something they knew nothing of in the background, and that he could not believe for one moment. There was no doubt his noble friend did betray great mistrust of the House of Commons, and perhaps he was wise in doing so, but that mistrust was the strongest evidence of the strength of their case. The noble lord was afraid to let the case go before a Committee, because he knew what the decision of a Committee would be; he knew that justice would be done there. What was the course the noble lord had pursued? He had not left them free and unfettered to decide this matter, a matter which was purely administrative and in which party obligation was in no way at stake. He had seen a good many four-line Whips, but he had never known such a Whip issued in order to enable a department to avoid a free enquiry. He asked the noble lord to remember that if it was excellent to have a giant's strength it was tyranny to use it like a giant. It was unworthy to invoke the aid of a big majority in jockeying fifty-eight poor officers out of their rights. Just as he would refuse to be dictated to on a question like this, he hoped and believed there were many members of the House who would not listen to the Front Bench, whether it was occupied by members of this or that party. Both Front Benches were tarred with the same brush; the right hon. gentleman the member for Wolverhampton was just as bad as the noble lord. They all knew that whichever side was in there was no justice to be got out of a man when once he got on to the Front Bench. Let him end as he began. They had not the slightest fear of the House of Commons. They asked for justice. They did not ask hon. members to pronounce any opinion on the merits of the case. They simply asked to be allowed to go before an impartial tribunal, and not to have their case decided by a packed jury, as it were. Before such a tribunal he undertook to prove their case up to the hilt. (Hear, hear.)

Lord George Hamilton said the hon. member for Horsham had made a very able speech, but he very naturally based it on information supplied to him. He did not wish to interrupt the hon. gentleman when he was wrong; indeed, had he done so, it would have been necessary to interpolate a correction at every sentence. He thought he would be able to show, in the course of his remarks, that there never was a weaker case put before the House of Commons than the present. But before he dealt with the question of the appointment of a Committee, he desired to say there were certain sentiments enunciated by his hon. friend with which he entirely agreed. He agreed that the Government were bound to keep faith with those they employed. He further agreed that the Government had no right whatever to wriggle out of an engagement by the ambiguity of the language employed; but, after all, the Indian Exchequer and the Indian taxpayer had their rights just as much as anybody else. What was the object of the appointment of a Select Committee? It was to reverse the decision of successive Viceroys, of successive Commanders-in-chief, of successive Secretaries of State, and of every military and civil member of their respective Councils for the last 16 years. There was an absolutely unbroken record of authority against this case, and it must be remembered that military opinion dominated the Indian Government to a greater degree than it did any other administration in her Majesty's dominions. It was a matter of notoriety that the arrangements made by the Indian Government in connection with these servants were far more generous and liberal than those sanctioned by this House or the Treasury, and, therefore, a very strong case must be made out before the House would attempt to interfere with the Indian Government, and put upon the Indian revenue a charge which the Indian Government considered injustice. What was the case which his hon. friends had presented? It was that these officers had been robbed—the hon member for Hull used the word jockeyed—out of their right to colonels' allowances. But these officers were allowed colonels' allowances; they were entitled to a certain establishment of colonels' allowances. The number of colonels' allowances to which this particular branch of the service was entitled was 13. These officers claimed that they had an unlimited right to colonels' allowances, but the East India Company in the past, and the Queen's Government since, had always put a limitation on the number of colonels' allowances, with one single exception. What had made this case complicated was that a number of facts wholly extraneous to the case had been dragged in in order to give colour to it. There were two sets of facts kept entirely distinct. The first related to the reform and reorganisation of the Indian army after the Mutiny, and the second related to those officers who joined the Indian army subsequent to the date of the transfer of authority. He thought he would be able to make it clear that both his hon. friends had been misled in the statements they had made. The Indian Mutiny was a terrible Imperial disaster, but it was largely caused by the defective military organisation of the native army in India. It was, therefore, self-evident that as soon as the powers of the East India Company were transferred to the Crown, the first duty of the Crown would be thoroughly to reorganise the native army. Great sympathy was felt with the European officers of the Company, many of whom had died at their posts during the Mutiny, and the rapid rehabilitation of British influence in India was largely due to their skill and valour. There was a strong feeling in the House of Commons that when the transference of powers took place these officers should not be prejudiced by the change. While the Bill was before Parliament a Committee was formed for the protection of the interests of these officers, and the Committee entered into various negotiations with the Government for the insertion of words, and ultimately certain words contained in the well-known "Henley clause" were agreed to. Those words were extremely wide, and were such as no Parliament nowadays would assent to: It was laid down that "These officers shall be under the same obligation to serve Her Majesty as they would have been to serve under the said Company, and shall be liable to serve within the same territorial limits only . . . . and shall be entitled to like pay, pensions, allowances, and privileges, and the like advantages as regards promotion as if they had continued in the service of the said Company." Those words applied to the old East India officers alone. They were purely retrospective in their

action, and a subsequent clause was inserted applying to all the officers who came in afterwards: "It shall be lawful for Her Majesty from time to time, by an Order in Council, to alter or regulate the terms and conditions of service under which persons hereafter entering Her Majesty's Indian forces shall be commissioned." There were, therefore, two sections in the Act. Under the one came all the old East India Company's officers, and under the other came all those who joined subsequently to 1858. What his hon. friend wished to do was to transfer the officers under the latter section to the former. If that proposal were assented to, he must say distinctly that it would be a gross breach of faith with the Indian Government, on whom this Henley clause had placed a tremendous obligation. In the work of reorganising the Indian Army, this Henley clause was a millstone round the neck of the Indian Government. They could not move in any direction without coming into contact with the guaranteed interests of the old officers. In the old days the army was organised under a system analogous to that in this country, and promotion was strictly by regimental seniority. To every regiment were attached somewhat less than thirty officers, on the average; and to every battalion was apportioned one colonel's allowance and no more. After the Indian Mutiny half the battalions disappeared. Various Commissions reported in favour of reductions, and the army was reduced from 250,000 to 120,000 men. An entirely different system of officering was also introduced—the irregular system, first applied to the cavalry and then to the infantry—under which the number of officers attached to a regiment was reduced to less than one-fourth of the old number. And yet the Indian Government had to give to every single officer the same pay, allowances, and promotion as would have existed if the old system had continued. Commission after Commission was appointed to see that the terms of the Henley clause were complied with, and concession after concession was made to meet the difficulty. The first of these concessions took the form of the Order, read out by the hon. member, giving colonels' allowances after ten years' service as full lieutenant-colonel. That Order applied only to the officers of the old East India Company, and was in no sense applicable to the officers whose case was brought forward by his hon. friend. In 1866, when the present Prime Minister was Secretary of State for India, a further Commission had reported that, notwithstanding all the concessions made, the guarantee clause had not been fulfilled as regarded the colonels' allowances to the old officers, and in despair the Government made a tremendous concession to those officers. In order to have a free hand in future in dealing with all these military problems, on which the security of India depended, it was necessary to buy out all these officers; and the Government allowed them to come in to the Staff Corps, and after twelve years' service to obtain colonels' allowances without regard to the number on the list. Now his hon. friend wished to apply those terms to the officers who had joined subsequently to 1858. Every military authority admitted that from the laxity of wording in the Henley clause the reorganisation of the Indian Army had cost India millions more than would otherwise have been necessary; and Parliament ought to be very careful before adding to the already heavy non-effective charges of the Indian Army. As to the officers whose case had been brought forward by his hon. friend, every one of those officers joined subsequently to the termination of the powers of the East India Company.

Mr. Heywood Johnstone: If my right hon. friend will pardon me, I have the names here of the Directors who nominated them.

Lord George Hamilton said that he thought his hon. friend had fallen into error. What occurred was that the whole of the powers of the Board of Directors ceased, and were transferred to the Secretary of State in Council. But a certain number of the directors were on the Council, where, however, they no longer acted as directors. So careful were the Indian Government, that they put under the Henley clause all the officers who up to that time had been nominated by the East India Company, but who had not actually joined the Service. His hon. friend had referred to the Report of the Commission appointed to enquire into the terms under which those officers should serve. His hon. friend must know that that Commission laid down that all these officers came in under the new conditions. It was idle to pretend now that they did not know they were coming in under the new conditions. They went out to India, and were put on the general list; but in 1861, after two years, the reforms in the Indian army had so far established themselves that certain alternatives of service were offered to these young men. They might join the white regiments, which had been transferred from the Company to the Crown, taking with them the Indian pensions, but having no claim to colonels' allowances, or they might join the Staff Corps—a service which had been instituted for the purpose of officering the irregular system. In that corps the promotion was regulated by length of service, and the officers were entitled to colonels' allowances at the ratio of 1 to 30 —the old ratio under the Company. Some of the officers selected the one Service and some another. Between 1861 and 1866 every officer on the general list—all those whose claims were advocated by his hon friend—could have joined the Staff Corps; but all did not, because they got better terms by remaining on the general list. When this tremendous concession was made in 1866, officers were requested to join the Staff Corps before a certain day. Having done that, they were entitled, after a certain term of service, to full colonels' allowances. There were a certain number of officers of the general list and British regiments who came in subsequently to 1861 and before 1866, and the question which the Indian Government had to consider was whether this exceptional privilege should be extended to those officers. For the purposes of uniformity, and to avoid having to deal with men on the same list in different ways, that concession was extended to the limited number of these men in the Staff Corps; but, with that exception, the ratio maintained had always been that of 1 to 30. His hon. friend talked about robbery. The facts showed how groundless was that charge. Under the order of 1864 the old rates of pensions were, after twenty years' service, £191, which was raised by the new order of 1882 to £250; after twenty-four years' service £292, raised to £365; after twenty-eight years' service £365, raised to £500; after thirty-two years' service £456, raised to £700; and after thirty-eight years' service £456, raised to £700. With the fullest desire to do justice, he had looked carefully into this matter, and he had found an absolutely unbroken record of official opinion against the claims put forward on behalf of those officers. But he was desirous, before coming to a final conclusion, to consult an authority higher than a Committee of the House of Commons —he meant the Military Committee of India, consisting of Field-Marshal Sir Donald Stewart, Sir Archibald Alison, and General Gordon; and he asked them to look into the matter, with the result that they had reported against the claims of those officers. It was said that this was a small matter, that there were only a few officers concerned; but if the House appointed a Committee to investigate the conditions under which those officers had enlisted, they would have to enquire into the cases not only of those on the effective list, but of those who had retired from the effective list in the belief that the decisions of the Secretary of State were final. He would ask, Would this claim be granted if it were to apply to English revenues? (Hear, hear.) It seemed to him it was a claim that the House could not possibly assent to. At the present moment there was great sympathy with the Indian Government, and proposals had been made from both sides of the House that assistance should be given to the Indian exchequer to enable them to tide over the temporary difficulties against which they were now contending. He did not think that they needed that assistance. He believed the Indian Government would manage to struggle on, provided they got fair play and were protected from motions of this kind, which he was sure would not be moved if they were to apply to the English taxpayer. (Hear, hear.) He undertook that there should be a complete fulfilment of any contract or engagement made by the Indian Government in regard to those officers, and he would take care that the Indian Government did not get the advantage of any ambiguity of phraseology in those contracts or engagements. Therefore, he thought he had the right to ask the House to protect the Indian Government from this motion, which he should characterise as one of the most unjustifiable that they had ever been subjected to.

Sir James Fergusson said that, as he had served for some years in the army, as he had been Under-Secretary for India in 1866, when the Commission was appointed, and as his services in the army in India had given him considerable knowledge of the position and claims of the officers in question, he desired to say a few words on the motion before the House. No doubt, upon the Paper circulated those officers had a certain case; but the

statements made in those Papers must be read with their context. He thought the Seconder of the Motion had put his case on too high a ground. It was not necessary to accuse the members of the Government and the successive officials who had borne the responsibility of administering the affairs of India, of having robbed those officers. Strong expressions of that kind were only resorted to when there was a weak case. To say that when men obtained places on the Treasury Bench they lost all sense of right and wrong was ridiculous. At any rate he, having sat on the Treasury Bench, had not been sensible of having had any such loss. He, for his part, thought that the officers of the old East India Company were treated with great liberality. If any error had been committed at all, it was an error of liberality. But if the letter of the law held out the promise of expectation to those officers that they would be entitled to the succession of colonel's allowances when they had reached thirty-eight years' service, they ought to have those allowances. He could not get over the statement put forward by these officers themselves. They were asked whether all appointments now made were to be subject to any alteration that might be decided on. His hon. friends who moved and seconded the motion said that that did not cover the alterations in the conditions of pay and service generally. There was as great an assumption on the one side as on the other. He had looked into this question as long ago as 1866, and he thought then, as he had thought ever since, that it did leave the Government of India free to make such conditions for these officers' services, after they had organised the service of the army, as seemed proper to them. He did not think a *primâ facie* case had been made out for an enquiry by Select Committee, and a Select Committee of that House ought not to be appointed unless such a *primâ facie* case was made out. (Hear, hear.)

General RUSSELL said a good many of his constituents believed that a grievance existed. These officers did not wish to have their case prejudged; what they wished was to put the matter before an impartial tribunal. The noble lord seemed to have jumped to the conclusion that this Commission was going to report against him, and talked about the burden which would be cast on the finances of India. The whole question appeared to him to be a very difficult one, and he did not intend to enter into it, but what he did contend was that these officers were entitled to have their case examined by an impartial and entirely unbiassed tribunal. (Hear, hear.) Secretaries of State for India had always taken their advice and been coached by officers of a rival corps, the Staff Corps. They all knew that these rivalries and jealousies existed in all services, in the army, the navy, and even, he was told, in the Church. These unfortunate officers could control no votes, but they had passed their lives in India and served their country gallantly, and therefore he hoped that hon. members would vote for this impartial enquiry by a Committee of the House of Commons.

Sir HENRY FOWLER said he felt bound to intervene on two grounds. He wished to express his entire approval of the policy which was being pursued by the noble lord, as well as his admiration for the masterly speech which he had addressed to the House on that occasion. (Hear, hear.) He must also say a word or two on the speech of the hon. member for Hull, who seconded this motion. He did not think that speech ought to pass unnoticed. He had always demurred in that House to reflections being made on the Government of India, especially when they were groundless. In this country we understood the criticisms which opposing political parties passed upon each other, and upon Ministers, with reference to party politics. But when a responsible member of that House, and especially a member occupying the position relating to India which the member for Hull did, distinctly told the House of Commons and the people of this country that the Government of India, as represented in that House by those Ministers whom her Majesty had been pleased to appoint Secretary of State for India, were absolutely devoid of impartiality, that they prejudged every case that came before them, that they were entirely in the hands of their military officials, that if they objected to an enquiry there was something in the background, and that they had jockeyed officers out of their just claims, he could only say that that long catalogue of charges against responsible Ministers in that House was one which he was not anxious to see reprinted in the press of India. He felt that it was his duty to enter a strong protest against applying that language to the present Government or to their predecessors, or to the Government of the Viceroy in India, or to the Indian Council in Whitehall—(hear, hear)—for they were all involved in the sweeping criticisms of the hon. member.

Sir H. SEYMOUR KING said he did not intend to convey anything of the kind. He had listened with utter amazement to the right hon. gentleman. On the contrary, he had said that the right. hon. gentleman and his noble friend had come to a decision which they believed to be perfectly accurate. He himself, however, honestly took the view that the matter should be submitted to an impartial tribunal.

Sir H. FOWLER said he was quite willing to believe that his hon. friend did not intend to convey what he said, but he had quoted verbatim the words which had been used. He demurred altogether to the statement that this matter had been prejudged. He believed it had been investigated by five Secretaries of State—the Duke of Devonshire, Lord Kimberley, Lord Cross, the noble lord opposite, and himself. The hon. member stated that he approached this question with impartiality and with a conscientious desire to do his duty. Did the hon. member suppose that Secretaries of State were incapable of impartiality, or were devoid of conscience or regard for duty? He did not think the hon. member meant that, but unfortunately he implied it, and he, therefore, wished to enter his protest. After the clear statement of the noble lord, he was not going into the merits; he would only recall to the House what was the crux of the situation. The same advantages were asked for by officers who had joined the service after the transfer of the Government of India to the Crown as was granted by the Act of 1858 to the old East Indian army by the East Indian Government. The hon. and gallant member who had just sat down said that there was a rivalry between the Staff Corps and other branches of the service, but these gentlemen got all that the Staff Corps got, and were put in precisely the same position. He disagreed totally with the construction which had been put upon the dispatch of 1864, but the real point on which the controversy rested was whether these officers were entitled under that dispatch to what, with all respect to the present Prime Minister, he would venture to call the disastrous concession subsequently made in 1866, by which colonels' allowances were given to the whole of the officers who were in the old East India Company's service. His opinion was that if the Indian Government had been disposed to press the point they might have been able to deprive the officers on the general list of any colonels' allowances, but they had been given an establishment of 13. So far as his knowledge extended, he considered the Indian Government had always treated their servants with the amplest generosity, and he thought they were treated with special liberality in 1882. There had been, he might almost say, a dozen enquiries, and the matter had been fully and carefully considered, and if the House appointed a Select Committee to enquire further into it, it would avowedly be a declaration of opinion on the part of the House that injustice had been done, and that the case had not been properly investigated. In the event of the Committee reporting in favour of granting these allowances, the House would find itself in a difficult position, for the Government of India was the sole judge of the charges that were to be imposed on the revenues of India. The Secretary of State had but one vote in the Council, and that House had by standing orders adapted to the case of East Indian expenditure the same rule as existed with reference to Imperial expenditure—namely, that no proposal could be made for any charge upon the revenues of this country or of India unless it was previously recommended by the Crown—in other words, by the Government of the day. He thought that groundless charges had been made against the Government of India with reference to their expenditure; but it would be a very heavy additional charge if this application was granted, for the noble lord was quite right in saying that they would have to open the case of every man who had retired and taken a pension. He thought it would be a serious thing if the House of Commons, in spite of the deliberate opinion of the Viceroy and his Council, in spite of the deliberate opinion of five or six Secretaries of State and their Councils, recommended a charge on the revenues of India which every one of those authorities thought ought not to be put upon them, and a burden they should not be called upon to bear. As far as the military question was concerned, surely the hon. member would not impute to three such distinguished officers as Sir Donald Stewart, Sir Archibald Alison, and General Gordon any jealous rivalries, or a desire to do injustice to any part of the military service. They would be the first to recognise even

shadowy claims, if they rested on justice. In the face of their advice, not only to the Secretary of State, but to the Government of the day, and with all respect to the House of Commons, he thought it would be an unwise thing for the House to take a step indicating a desire to reverse the policy which had been pursued, and implying that the Government, both in India and at home, had been influenced by improper motives, or had prejudged the case, had not acted impartially, and had not done what he himself knew they intended to do, and what the Secretary for India, speaking quite as much for the Opposition side of the House as for his own, said that the Government would always do—whatever was fair and just to the distinguished men who, whether in a civil or military capacity, had served the Crown in the Government of India. (Cheers.)

The House divided upon Mr. Heywood Johnstone's motion, when the figures were:—

For the motion	55
Against	174
Majority against	119

April 29th.

HOUSE OF COMMONS.

THE INDIAN BUDGET.

On the motion of Sir H. H. Fowler a Return was granted for "Copy of the Indian Financial Statement for 1897-8, and of the proceedings of the Legislative Council of the Governor General thereon."

EAST INDIA COMPANY'S OFFICERS' SUPERANNUATION BILL.

The East India Company's Officers' Superannuation Bill was read a third time, and passed.

April 30th.

HOUSE OF COMMONS.

THE PLAGUE.

Sir Walter Foster asked the President of the Local Government Board whether the Indian transport "Dilwara," which arrived at Southampton on 6th April, had had a fatal case of plague on board during her voyage:

Whether the local authorities found their sanitary powers sufficient to protect the local health interests:

And, whether that was the second occasion within the last few months on which the infection of plague on board ship had been successfully dealt with in this country without any resort to quarantine detention of vessels and persons.

Mr. T. W. Russell: A fatal case of plague occurred on board the Indian transport "Dilwara" after the vessel had left Bombay. The body was buried at sea; and under the recent Venice Convention, only the two actual attendants on the sick person were detained at Suez (Moses' wells), the vessel at once passing through the canal in quarantine. On reaching Southampton on April 6 the "Dilwara" was met by a medical inspector of the Board, who acted in concert with the military and local port authorities. No further case had occurred, and under the excellent arrangements organised by the port medical officer all the 1,235 persons on board were allowed to land, and the existing powers were found to be fully sufficient to protect all health interests concerned. The hon. member is quite correct in his assumption. This is the second occasion within the last few months on which the infection of plague on board ship has been successfully dealt with without resort to any quarantine detention of either vessels or persons. (Hear, hear.)

May 3rd.

HOUSE OF COMMONS.

PETITION.

East India (Bubonic Plague).—Petition of Nandram Onkardas Marvadi, for alteration of Plague Laws; to lie upon the Table.

INDIA AND THE "DIAMOND JUBILEE."

Mr. Parker Smith asked the Secretary of State for India whether he proposed to make provision for any representatives of the more distinguished regiments of the Native Infantry being present in London on the occasion of Her Majesty's Jubilee.

Captain Bagot asked the Secretary of State for India whether any and, if so, what regiments of Indian Native Infantry were going to be represented on the occasion of the celebration of the 60th year of Her Majesty's reign.

Lord George Hamilton: On the occasion of the Jubilee in 1887, it was decided that the Indian Army as a whole should be represented by 13 officers of native Cavalry; and it is proposed on the present occasion to follow that precedent, but to increase the number from 13 to 22. To these will be added 18 native officers representing the Imperial Service troops, which are maintained by the Native States for service with the regular army in time of war. Any proposal to bring home a selection of Native Infantry soldiers and at the same time to keep the numbers of the representative detachment within reasonable bounds, was held in 1887, and is held now, to be attended by almost insuperable difficulties.

These difficulties I much regret, for I should have been glad to have been able to give prominence at Her Majesty's Jubilee to the Native Infantry who have on so many occasions done such splendid service for the Empire.

May 6th.

HOUSE OF COMMONS.

APPOINTMENTS TO THE ACCOUNTS OFFICE.

Mr. Herbert Roberts asked the Secretary of State for India, whether his attention had been drawn to the circular, dated 11th January, 1897, and issued at the instance of Sir James Westland, by the Comptroller-General of India to his nine subordinates, with reference to the appointment of a number of higher classed clerks, at salaries of 60 rupees and upwards per month to the Accounts Office:

And, whether these selections were to be made without the test of examination, and from among Europeans and Eurasians; and whether the reason assigned by the Finance Minister for such a step was to prevent the offices being filled with Bengalees exclusively.

Lord George Hamilton: I have not seen the circular itself, but I have read the reference to it in the proceedings of the Legislative Council on the 13th and 27th of March, and the orders of Government therein mentioned.

These orders state that, the appointments being probationary, there is an opportunity to select for the higher posts either graduates or others qualified by their education, or candidates from other branches of the service. It is pointed out that promotion from the lower grades is in no way forbidden, but that "by confining the higher appointments too narrowly to persons who have entered the service in the lower grades, the very classes of natives among whom the best and most competent officers are likely to be found are excluded."

May 10th.

HOUSE OF COMMONS.

THE ECCLESIASTICAL ESTABLISHMENT.

On the motion of Mr. Herbert Roberts, a "Return was granted showing the Charges of the Ecclesiastical Establishment in India, for the year 1895-6 on account of the Church of England, Church of Scotland, Church of Rome, and other Churches; and showing as far as possible, in the several Provinces of British India, what payments are made at stations (a) where there are European troops, and (b) where there are no European troops."

THE VAGARIES OF "POLITICAL AGENTS."

Mr. Pickersgill asked the Secretary of State for India whether his attention had been drawn to the indignities alleged to have been inflicted on the widow of the Nawab of Radhanpur through the political agent, Major Lyde, under

whose order the guards were removed from the zenana, the Begum's allowances stopped, her jewels and wardrobe seized, and property assigned to her by the will of the Nawab taken away:

Whether he was aware that, under the pretext of securing hidden treasures, the palace had been rudely rifled two or three times, the last occasion being so recently as the 15th April:

If treasure had been found at the palace, was he satisfied that it belonged to the State, and not to the estate of the late Nawab, to be applied for purposes designated in his will:

And, could copies of the reports of the political agent, and of the memorial presented by the Begum to the Bombay Government, be laid upon the Table, together with such replies as Lord Sandhurst's Government might have recorded in reference to these transactions.

Lord George Hamilton: I am aware of the circumstances to which the hon. member's question relates. The object of the measures which have been taken was to prevent the misappropriation of property which belongs to the State of Radhanpur, and I am advised that the Goverment of Bombay is satisfied that the property thus recovered is State property, with the exception of certain articles which, as soon as they were proved to belong to the Hindu widow of the late Nawab, were at once restored to her. I have no reason to believe that any harsh or offensive measures were employed. When the correspondence relating to this matter is complete, I will consider whether it can be laid on the Table of the House.

May 13th.

HOUSE OF LORDS.

EAST INDIA COMPANY'S OFFICERS' SUPERANNUATION BILL.

The Earl of Onslow moved the Second Reading of the East India Company's Officers' Superannuation Bill, the object of which is to set at rest certain doubts which have arisen as to the powers of the Secretary of State with regard to officers who were originally upon the establishment of the East India Company, and have now, under the Act of Parliament, been transferred to the control of the Secretary of State for India in Council. There were, he said, only 12 of them still surviving.

The Bill was read a second time.

REGULAR AND ELDERS' WIDOWS' FUNDS BILL.

The Earl of Onslow, in moving the Second Reading of the Regular and Elders' Widows' Funds Bill, said this, again, was a Bill to set at rest certain legal doubts respecting the vesting in the Secretary of State the surplus funds belonging to this institution. By actuarial calculation it had been discovered that the assets were considerably in excess of the liabilities, and, as the object of the fund would in the course of a very short time come to an end, it was deemed advisable that whatever might be left over should be vested in the Secretary of State, instead of in the hands of trustees who were under legal disability from transferring them to any other person.

The Bill was read a second time.

HOUSE OF COMMONS.

PETITION.

Singh, Gopal, —Petition of Gopal Singh, for redress of grievances; to lie upon the Table.

THE INDIAN BUDGET—PAPERS PRESENTED.

East India (Finance and Revenue Accounts).—Copy presented,—of Finance and Revenue Accounts of the Government of India for 1895-6 [by Act]; to lie upon the Table.

East India (Home Accounts).—Copy presented,—of Home Accounts of the Government of India [by Act] to lie upon the Table.

"EXCHANGE COMPENSATION" ALLOWANCE.

Sir Seymour King asked the Secretary of State for India, whether he was yet in a position to announce the decision of the Government of India in regard to the various questions still pending in respect of exchange compensation.

Lord George Hamilton: Exchange compensation is authorised for Europeans appointed in England, and for officers appointed as Europeans in India to offices in which European qualifications are held to be indispensable, or to services and departments in which a proportion of Europeans is held by the Government of India to be indispensable. The Government of India are now considering the rules which must be issued in order to carry into effect this decision of the Secretary of State in Council.

PRESERVATION OF ANCIENT MONUMENTS.

Sir William Wedderburn asked the Secretary of State for India, whether he would state what had been done with reference to a memorial on the subject of the preservation of ancient monuments in India, which was presented to the Secretary of State for India on the 13th July, 1894, on behalf of the Royal Academy of Arts, the Society of Antiquaries of London, the Society for the Protection of Ancient Buildings, and the Royal Archæological Institute:

And, whether he would lay upon the Table of the House the correspondence which had taken place regarding that memorial.

Lord George Hamilton: The memorial cited in the hon. baronet's question was forwarded in April, 1894, to the Government of India for their consideration. I am not aware what measures, if any, the Government of India have taken in consequence of the suggestions which it contains, but I will enquire, and will communicate the result to the hon. member. At present the correspondence cannot be regarded as complete, but, when it is so, I will consider whether papers can be laid on the Table.

SUGGESTED REDUCTION OF THE SALT-TAX.

Sir William Wedderburn asked the Secretary of State for India, whether he was aware that there was a very general feeling in India that the high duty on salt should be reduced for this year at least, in view of the sufferings of the poorer classes from famine, the loss of revenue caused thereby being included in the cost of famine relief:

Whether he was aware that such reduction could be effected by an executive order of the Government of India:

And, whether he would direct the Government of India to issue such an order.

Lord G. Hamilton: I am not aware that there is any general feeling in India that the salt duty should be reduced for one year. I may, on the contrary, point out that any such limitation of the period of reduction would be practically impossible, because, if an abatement for one year only were announced enough salt for consumption during a very much longer period would undoubtedly be drawn out of bond or otherwise passed into stock within the year. The price of salt is now, for the majority of the people of India, lower than it was 20, 30 or 40 years ago, and the incidence of the duty is about 4½d. per head per annum. In these circumstances, although I feel most deeply for the sufferings which a large number of Her Majesty's Indian subjects have been and are undergoing, I do not propose to issue any orders with regard to the salt duty.

"EXCHANGE COMPENSATION" ALLOWANCE.

Sir Willam Wedderburn asked the Secretary of State for India, whether the Viceroy of India, the Governors and Lieutenant-Governors of Presidencies and Provinces, and members of the different councils drew Exchange compensation allowance in addition to their salaries; whether the salaries of some of them were not fixed in rupees by Statute; and whether the grant of the allowance taken without statutory amendment was legal:

And, whether it was a fact that the allowance was granted to such European officers as made no remittances to England; and, if so, on what grounds.

Lord George Hamilton: Exchange compensation has hitherto been drawn by all the European officers in India who are entitled to it under the regulations. Among these are about 40 officers whose salaries are fixed in rupees under

Statute; and doubts have been raised whether, in their case, the compensation, though obviously equitable, may not be technically illegal. Opinions on that point differ, and the matter is now under my consideration with a view of obtaining further advice.

The compensation allowance is intended to protect European officers in India against an excessive depreciation of their emoluments by the fall in exchange, and is confined by the regulations to those classes which as a rule are seriously affected by it: but it is not thought necessary or advisable to make any special enquiry into the private circumstances of individual officers.

May 14th.

HOUSE OF LORDS.

THE HEALTH OF BRITISH TROOPS IN INDIA.

The Earl of Dunraven rose to call attention to the prevalence of contagious diseases in her Majesty's Army, especially in India, and to move, "That, in view of the Report of the Departmental Committee of the India Office of February 20, 1897, it is, in the opinion of this House, urgently necessary that an enquiry be made into the effect of such diseases upon the forces of the Crown, the civil population, and the native races within her Majesty's dominions, and into the nature and results of the measures which are or have been in force in this and other countries for the prevention of such diseases." He observed that the report which had been issued by the Departmental Committee made it unnecessary for him to go in great detail into ancient facts and statistics, but it opened up a very much larger aspect of the whole case, because it referred not only to the reaction of the disease upon her Majesty's troops in India, but also to the reaction and its effects upon the whole population at home. While he most heartily approved and applauded what the Government had done, he could not conscientiously say he believed that any measures which might be taken by the Indian Government subject to the limitations which were laid down in the despatch of the Secretary of State would prove efficacious in dealing with this evil, which was so detrimental to the strength of the army in India and so dangerous to the health of the whole community at home. In 1887 the admissions to hospital from venereal diseases were 362 per 1,000. In 1895 they had risen to 537 per 1,000. That was to say, that during those eight years the proportion of men on the sick list owing to these causes had increased at the rate of 48 per cent., and more than half the total number of the forces in India had been affected by the diseases. The report of the Committee stated that in 1895, 45 per 1,000, or, altogether, 3,200 men, out of a total force of 71,031, were constantly in hospital from this cause. These were terribly high figures; but, bad as they were, they did not, as the report showed, by any means represent the actual inefficiency, for there were cases which, being treated outside the hospital, did not come into the returns at all. There were men treated for diseases of another character which were either induced or greatly aggravated by venereal disease, and numbers of men were discharged from hospital as cured who were yet totally unfit for active service. Among 5,822 men detailed for field service with the Chitral relief force, 462, or nearly 8 per cent., had to be rejected for venereal disease, and 279 more, or an additional 4½ per cent., had to be transferred from field hospitals to the base from the same cause. Calculating on that basis, they were face to face with the appalling fact that out of a force of 70,000 men, no less than 9,000, or 13 per cent. of the whole, were unfit for active service owing to a cause which, to a great extent at any rate, was a preventable cause. (Hear, hear.) Putting aside altogether their duty as a civilised country, putting aside what he thought was their duty as a humane nation acting within the spirit of the religion they professed, putting aside also the protective duty that Parliament owed to the whole community, and looking at the matter purely from a commercial point of view as a mere question of pounds, shillings, and pence, it was perfectly plain that if efficacious steps could be taken to check the ravages of this disease there would be a greater gain to the efficiency of the army than there would be by the increase to the army that the Legislature had recently sanctioned. The knowledge of the prevalence of these diseases had a most detrimental effect on recruiting. Not only had the diseases increased enormously in quantity, but they had also increased enormously in virulence. In 1887 there were 29 per 1,000 suffering from secondary syphilis. That number had been steadily rising until it now amounted to 85 per 1,000. The returns for 1894 showed that, out of a total of 70,000 men in India, 5,421 had been in hospital for secondary diseases during the term of their Indian service, and probably many more were suffering from the same disease who had not been treated in hospital for it. The officials at Netley declared that never had there been so many cases of secondary syphilis in the hospital, nor of so bad a type. Consider the effect that that must have upon the civil population at home. Out of 13,000 men who returned from India every year, 3,640 were impregnated with this terrible and fatal disease, and a very small proportion were married. They become absorbed in the population at home; they married, and in many cases they transmitted the disease to their innocent offspring. The present condition of the army in India was therefore a great and growing source of danger to the whole community, and the influence which it was liable to exercise on the whole population was one of the gravest aspects of the whole question, worthy of the attention not only of Parliament, but of the whole country. The gravity of the disease had always been known; the Royal College of Physicians, among other authorities, describing it as "one of the most serious, insidious, and lasting of all the contagious diseases that afflict humanity." A constant stream of men was being poured into the population and absorbed by it, conveying the most persistent and the most virulent poison known into the blood of the people. As to the army generally, he maintained that the figures were not creditable to us. In round numbers, the figures per 1,000 were—in Germany 27, France 44, Russia 43, Austria 65, Italy 71, and British troops in the United Kingdom 204. Various measures had been enforced both at home and in India to deal with the evil. He admitted that the preventive and sanitary measures adopted in India had been more or less a partial failure, because they had disappointed those who had expected better results. But the causes of the partial failure were the change to the short service system, which sent into India a very large number of very young and inexperienced men; the creation of camps of exercise; and the greater movement of troops throughout the country. When the men were in the cantonments they were influenced by the regulations in force; when they were absent from the cantonments they were not so influenced; and it would be found that disease increased whenever large numbers of men were absent from the cantonments and decreased when they were within the sphere of influence of protective and sanitary measures. Strong presumptive evidence on that point was made conclusive by the enormous increase in disease and the increase in its severity since the Indian Government were obliged, owing to a most lamentable resolution of the Legislature (cheers), to abolish the regulations. That view was borne out by all the authorities most competent to judge. An experiment was made by the Indian Government in 1884. They closed some hospitals to see what the result would be; and in 1885 it was reported that the experimental closure had resulted in "such an enormous and progressive increase in the prevalence of disease that the military authorities considered it absolutely essential to the efficiency of the troops stationed in the cantonments concerned that the Lock hospitals should be speedily re-opened and the preventive rules again enforced." The Army Sanitary Commission reported not many years ago rather adversely to the regulations; but now they said, "We have now proof that the measures heretofore adopted in India, imperfectly administered as they often were, nevertheless exercised a very sensible influence in checking increase in the number of British soldiers admitted into hospital for venereal disease and in mitigating the severity of the disease itself." After indicating that both in this country and in India regulations and sanitary measures had proved most beneficial, he stated that there was an Act in force in India dealing with other contagious diseases like typhoid, cholera, and small-pox; but, owing to the resolution of the House of Commons, this particular disease was not allowed to come under the operation of the sanitary rules. This disease was made a privileged disease (cheers), and allowed to contract itself out of the Act. He was glad to say that the Government had relieved the country of that gross slur on its common sense and humanity. (Hear, hear.) At any rate, this disease was placed in the same category as all other contagious diseases. But he did not see how it was

possible for a medical officer to obtain credible testimony of disease in this instance. He insisted on the necessity of medical examination if any effective action was to be taken, and said he should be perfectly content if the Indian Government had a free hand in the matter. The other day the committee of the Institute of Public Health, under the chairmanship of Lord Playfair, were preparing a congratulatory address to her Majesty on the great progress made in matters of public health during her reign. A great advance had indeed been made except in one particular, and was it not a scandalous thing, an iniquitous thing, that if they wished to congratulate the Sovereign they must either wilfully shut their eyes to the existence of a terrible evil or they must admit that never during her reign had her forces been so decimated by disease and never had the country been in such danger from the same cause? (Cheers.) That was due to the action of Parliament in deference to a genuine but a very mistaken opinion. (Cheers.) He could not understand why all people who recognized the danger of pouring a poison of this kind into the blood of the nation could not unite in their efforts to cleanse the blood of the Army and to purge the blood of the nation, and to remove so great a scandal from us as a civilised State. As practical men they had to deal with men as they were, and not as they ought to be. If the time came when moral force was sufficiently strong to enable men, at the age when the instincts were strongest and the will power weakest, successfully to resist one of the most dominating of human instincts, then there would be no need for sanitation. But, while we did everything possible to bring that time about, it surely behoved us meanwhile to do what could legitimately be done to save these men and the whole nation from the effects of acts which might be immoral and improper. (Hear, hear.) There were many matters in connexion with this subject on which information was needed. Whether the general sanitary law in India could be made more effective; the general and local amount and character of the disease in India; the regulations enforced in other countries and the colonies, especially where they had dealings with native races; all these were questions about which information was difficult to obtain. He did not know where he should go to learn what effect we had had upon the native races with which we had come into contact. That subject had never been much noticed, but it ought to be; because, though we might have a perfect right to colonise and extend our possessions, we could not have any moral right to plant alongside the flag the seeds of an insidious and terrible disease. (Hear, hear.) Public opinion needed instruction, though, thank God! it had greatly changed on this matter. The great mass of opinion in the country was beginning to realise the gravity of the evil, and the sinfulness of inaction. The Departmental Committee had performed a most admirable work in bringing together in an accessible form the immense amount of information which was before diffused and difficult to obtain; and he thought that an investigation and report of a similar character, but more extensive, would be the best form of enquiry to hold. Nearly all that was wanted could be obtained from the three Departments most concerned—the War Office, the Colonial Office, and the India Office; but the information must be collated, weeded, examined, and brought into accessible shape, so that those who wished to instruct themselves on this great national matter should have facilities for doing so. (Hear, hear.) He was rather puzzled to know what to do in respect to the amendment which was to be moved. Theoretically, he entirely agreed with it; but he did not see how it was practicable. But perhaps if the House agreed to his motion and refused to accept the amendment, they might put themselves in a position which would be capable of misconstruction. In some quarters his motion had been misconstrued as a dilatory motion; but nothing was further from his intentions. He asked for an enquiry because he thought information was greatly needed to educate public opinion. He entirely applauded her Majesty's Government for the steps which they had taken; but he feared that they would not prove effectual, and that their comparative failure would be used as an argument against any regulations. He looked upon this as a matter of great national moment. (Cheers.) It was not a question of party. (Hear, hear.) He would support any Government which attempted to deal efficaciously with this great evil; and he was certain that the great bulk of common-sense opinion in the country would sustain this or any Government in a resolute attempt to check the ravages of an evil which was so detrimental to her Majesty's forces and so dangerous to the whole population, and which was a scandal to this country as a great people and a civilised nation. (Cheers.)

Lord Roberts of Kandahar said: The subject brought forward by the noble lord is one which nobody would willingly discuss in public if he could conscientiously avoid doing so, and I have been most reluctant to take part in this debate. But, my lords, I recognise so strongly the necessity for measures being adopted to arrest the progress of a great and growing evil—an evil which is sapping the strength of our army and paralysing many of our best troops—that I feel I should be wanting in my duty to my country and the service to which I have the honour to belong, were I to shrink from speaking plainly or neglect to do whatever lies in my power to make my countrymen understand the culpability of permitting to continue unchecked a horrible disease, so far-reaching in its results that it threatens seriously to injure the health and physique of a large proportion of the population of the United Kingdom. (Hear, hear.) I do not propose to take up your lordships' time by giving detailed statistics of the disastrous effects of this disease upon the British troops in India; the proceedings of the committee presided over by the Under-Secretary of State for India show how appalling these effects are. I wish merely to draw your attention, my lords, to two facts which completely, I think, prove the fallacy of the assertion that contagious disease in India has not increased since the abolition of the Contagious Diseases Acts, and clearly demonstrate the necessity for action being taken without delay to preserve the health and efficiency of British soldiers serving in our Eastern Empire. One of the facts, my lords, which I would bring to your notice is the extraordinary number of men now being invalided from India, suffering from the effects of this loathsome disease, as compared with the numbers invalided from the same cause when the Contagious Diseases Act was in force. In the statement which I hold in my hand the comparison is made out for 1879 and 1880, the two years immediately preceding the relaxation of the regulations framed under the Contagious Diseases Act, and for 1894 and 1895, the two latest years for which returns are available. In 1879 and 1880 the number of British soldiers in India (exclusive of those on service in Afghanistan) were respectively 49,507 and 50,136. During these two years only 126, or less than ·13 per cent., were invalided to England on account of this special disease. In 1894 and 1895 the number of British soldiers in India were respectively 70,983 and 68,331, of whom a total of no less than 648, or nearly ·5 per cent., were sent home from this same cause. In other words, the proportion of men invalided during the latter period on account of this disease was more than four times as great as it was when the Contagious Diseases Act was in force. (Hear, hear.) The other fact, my lords, to which I would draw your attention is the number of British soldiers who were found unfit to do their duty during the short time the Chitral expeditionary force was employed in 1895. That force consisted, in round numbers, of 6,000 British and 11,000 native soldiers. The troops selected were all medically examined before the expedition started, and about 8 per cent. of the British soldiers were weeded out as unfit for service on account of this most horrible form of contagious disease. The force crossed the frontier on April 3, and by July 31, less than four months, 957 British and only 294 native soldiers had been sent back sick to India. And Lieut.-General Sir Robert Low, commanding the force, reported that this enormous excess of British soldiers was entirely due to contagious disease, not disease contracted locally, for the condition of affairs rendered that an impossibility, but the old disease breaking out afresh in consequence of the hardships and privations of a four months' campaign. In all other respects the British were as healthy as the native soldiers; so, taking the number of natives sent back as normal, the proportion of British should have been 160, instead of 957. Or, to put it in plainer language, 797 men, more than 13 per cent. of the British troops engaged, were rendered unfit for their duty as soldiers, and therefore a useless expense to the State, from what the majority of our medical officers call preventable disease. These figures, and those given in Lord Onslow's report, alarming as, I think, my lords, you must consider them, for they show that one-fourth of the 70,000 soldiers serving in India are unable to take the field from contagious disease and its consequent disabilities, cannot be gainsaid. And they further prove how fallacious is the argument urged by the

opponents of the Contagious Diseases Act, that the protective regulations enforced under that Act failed to mitigate the evil which caused them to be introduced. I know, my lords, that those regulations did not work all the good that was hoped for, but this was not the fault of the regulations, but of the half-hearted manner in which they were applied. So apathetically were they brought into force that, although the Cantonment Act which legalised the regulations was passed in 1864, it was not until 1869, five years later, that Fort William and its environs were protected, although this is certainly the station most in need of precautionary measures on account of its immediate proximity to the city of Calcutta. Up to the last, 12 military stations in Bengal were left unprotected, and at three of those stations in 1879 the number of admissions to hospital from contagious disease actually rose to upwards of 700 per 1,000 men. I think, my lords, you must agree with me that it speaks well for the beneficial results of the Act that, notwithstanding these astounding figures were included in the total number of registered cases during the year, the proportion of men invalided was, as I have already shown, nearly four times greater in 1894 and 1895 than it was in 1879 and 1880. The truth is, my lords, the Contagious Diseases Act was never given a fair trial in India. It was not believed in by the authority responsible to the Government of India for its being properly carried out, and, in consequence, no attempt was ever made to investigate the working of the Act or to ascertain what cases of disease were contracted within the area to which the Act applied, and what cases were contracted outside that area; so that, even if every station in India had been brought within the scope of the Act, the good really done by the Act could not have been correctly appreciated from the figures furnished by the sanitary commissioner. Tables prepared from such unreliable *data* were bound to bring the Act into disrepute, and to strengthen the arguments of those who were, and are still, opposed to its introduction. Then, again, my lords, the Act was administered in some places with zeal and intelligence by medical officers, in others it was carried on in a very perfunctory manner. When visiting Lock hospitals I invariably found that success was complete when the medical officer in charge took an interest in his work and satisfied himself that those who came for treatment were properly looked after. The disease under such auspices diminished rapidly, and at one station, where it had been extremely prevalent, it was almost entirely stamped out owing to the exertions of the medical officer. I am well aware, my lords, that those who are opposed to the enforcement of the Contagious Diseases Act contend that direct interference is adverse to morality, and that, in all justice, the sinner should be allowed to reap the punishment of his sin. Although to my mind this is not a very Christian doctrine, I can understand and respect the horror of wrong-doing of which it is the outcome, provided the punishment could be confined to the sinner himself; but what I cannot understand is how any one can think it right to take no measures to prevent the spread of an evil which involves disease and misery on innocent women and children, and which must seriously injure equally innocent generations in the future. In my opinion it is as bad or worse than it would be to allow a mad dog to bite as many people as he felt inclined, or to permit a person known to have smallpox or diphtheria to mix freely with people in health. I say worse, because the evil in such cases might, at all events, be limited to those bitten or infected; while, in the other, it is impossible to calculate how far-reaching will be the deadly results of neglecting to take precautions. My lords, we have to deal with human nature, and, in considering the question at issue, we must not lose sight of the fact that, year by year, several thousand young men—mere boys, indeed—freed from all moral restraint, arrive in India and are at once subject to great and peculiar temptations. For many months of the year they are necessarily kept within barracks from sunrise to sunset, only to emerge when darkness, which comes on so rapidly in the East, prohibits anything in the shape of such healthy recreation as out-door games. A great deal has been done of late years by the Government of India to enable the men to amuse themselves in a rational manner, by providing comfortable and attractive reading-rooms, coffee shops, etc. These regimental institutes, as they are called, have helped to raised the tone of our soldiers and to reduce crime, especially drunkenness, but they seem to have had, I regret to say, but little effect in preventing contagious disease, which, though it might have assumed still more gigantic proportions had these counter-attractions not been provided, has, notwithstanding all that has been done in this direction, gone on steadily increasing, as your lordships will perceive from Lord Onslow's committee's report. Other and more direct measures should now be resorted to. The disease under consideration ought to be treated as all other contagious diseases are treated. It is even more essential that precautionary measures should be adopted in regard to it than to any other disease, for, as stated in the report of the Royal College of Physicians, dated March 23 last, "the constitutional form of the disease is one of the most serious, insidious and lasting of all the contagious diseases that afflict humanity." When it is prevalent there should be periodical examinations of all unmarried soldiers during their first period of service, and of older soldiers, if thought necessary, and any infringement of the order requiring men to report themselves on the first sign of becoming affected should be severely punished. There ought to be no doubt as to the intention of these orders in the Army Regulations, but I am afraid that they are now frequently lost sight of and the importance of strictly enforcing them not thoroughly appreciated. With regard to women, I would leave the matter in the hands of the Government of India, on the distinct understanding, as stated in the Secretary of State's despatch, that "there must be nothing which can be represented as an encouragement to vice." In the interests of morality, and to protect, as far as possible, young soldiers from temptation, women professionally belonging to a certain class should be forbidden to reside in regimental bazaars or follow regiments on the line of march. And in every military station all women, professional or otherwise, known to have communicated disease to a soldier, should be obliged to submit to medical treatment and subsequent periodical examinations, or to quit the station and its immediate neighbourhood. Each case of expulsion should be carried out in communication with the local civil authorities, who will, I trust, be empowered to take such further action as may be considered necessary for the protection of the community at large. To limit the Contagious Diseases Act (or whatever regulations the Government of India may think proper to introduce) to cantonments and to exclude the neighbouring cities and towns would, in my opinion, be altogether insufficient, and would certainly not get at the root of the evil. There must, of course, be some punishment, such as fine or imprisonment, for disobedience of orders, but my belief is that it would seldom have to be enforced if the women are kindly treated in the Government hospitals. The employment of women as coolies in the construction and repairs of barracks should be discouraged, but where this kind of labour is unavoidable special precautions should be taken by means of civil and regimental police. These are surely only reasonable preventive measures, in the enforcement of which there should be little difficulty, for the calling of every person in a cantonment in India is well known. Boundary pillars mark off the space set apart for the soldiers' barracks, parade ground, and officers' quarters, and within these limits, at any rate, it is our bounden duty to protect the health of our soldiers, who, we must remember, are cut off from the pleasures and enjoyments of home life, and are compelled to live as single men for a certain number of years. If there is reason to suspect that the disease is contracted outside the cantonment limits, the country round should be put out of bounds and the number of men on duty as regimental police should be increased until matters improve. I have myself found this an effective way of checking the spread of this terrible scourge. I believe that much valuable assistance might be afforded by military chaplains if they would interest themselves in the matter. An excellent example has been set by the Rev. John Crauford, a Presbyterian clergyman at Meerut, who, a few years ago, established a "Purity Society" at that station for the benefit of soldiers, many of whom joined it, with the happiest results both as regards health and conduct. Something also might be gained by warning young and inexperienced soldiers, on first arrival in India, of the aggravated effects of immorality in such a climate, and its appalling results, as can be seen at Netley Hospital. I am certain, too, that medical officers would be able to do a great deal towards the desired end if they were brought into closer communication with troops than they are at present. (Hear, hear.) They never now see or know the men as they did formerly, except those who come to them for treatment in hospital; and the cordial intercourse which used to exist between the combatant and medical officers, and

which was so conducive to good fellowship and to the general health of the army (cheers), is, unfortunately, a thing of the past. I trust, my lords, I have not wearied you. (Cries of "No.") My excuse for taking up so much of your time is that the efficiency of the army and the moral and material well-being of the soldiers I love so well are at stake. I beg you, my lords, to give this painful subject your most careful consideration, and I earnestly hope that the British public may be induced to look upon it from a wise and prudent, as well as from a merciful and Christian, point of view. (Cheers.)

The Archbishop of Canterbury: I am grateful to the noble earl and the gallant general for the way in which they have handled what is unquestionably a very difficult subject. I do not think it can be denied that the disease and its effects have come to such a point that it is impossible to refuse a thorough enquiry into the whole matter. I do not think it is possible to read the papers which have been distributed to members of of this House without feeling that it is the imperative duty of the Legislature to look into the matter and see what ought to be done. (Hear, hear.) I think there is one class of consideration which has not received full attention in either of the speeches we have listened to; it is quite certain that you cannot get to the root of such an evil as this without giving a very large part of your attention to the moral side of the whole question. The old regulations were objected to, and not a moment too soon, because they unquestionably had the effect of giving the impression to the soldiers that the sin in which they were indulging was not anything very wrong in itself, and that it was the business and purpose of the Government not to stamp the sin as an evil, but only to stop the effects of it. I do not think there can be any doubt that that was the only impression which could be made upon the soldiers at the time when it was the custom to provide for the indulgence of this sin by special establishments. It was a long time ago, but there still remains the same kind of impression. The authorities should make it very clear that they look upon this kind of indulgence as a very evil thing which is to be condemned by every good man and by every good soldier. If you can change the tone of the army in that respect, you will have done something towards getting rid of the evil. It can never be done by mere regulations, and if your regulations are of such a character as to maintain the belief that you do not really care about the wrong of the self-indulgence, and that you only want to have soldiers who can fight, depend upon it all your regulations will fall short of really extirpating the mischief. It is the habitual and continued indulgence that keeps up this mischief, and the temptation is increased by barrack-room conversation and the way in which the soldiers regard the sin itself. As long as that is the case you cannot have the co-operation of the men themselves in getting rid of the evil, and without their own co-operation it is hopeless to endeavour to raise any class of men to a higher position. If you leave out all this moral consideration, and think only of sanitary regulations as if they were really the complete remedy, every now and then you will find that your sanitary regulations will altogether fail. If there is to be an enquiry, it ought to go beyond the mere examination of the sanitary regulations that may be made, and should consider how you can get at the soldier's conscience and his habits of life. How very much more might be done, for instance, if a larger number of men were allowed to marry. It would, no doubt, cost you money, but it will not cost you as much as the present evil costs you. Something has been done, no doubt, to employ the soldiers and to keep their minds away from that sensuality which, when once men have allowed their imaginations to be affected by it, is sure to constantly recur to their minds. More may be done by occupying them in employment agreeable and interesting to them in their idle moments, and a great deal more than has yet been tried should be tried in this regard. I am only using this as an illustration of what I mean. I do not mean there are not many other things I could mention myself that could be done with this view. But what I want to emphasise is that in all that is done the moral impress made on the troops is to be one of the first considerations, and that, whatever regulations you make, you are doing, perhaps, benefit for the moment, but certain mischief for the future, if you let soldiers think you do not care whether they are moral or not. (Hear, hear.) I think, my lords, an enquiry which looked into this side of the matter with as much care as a medical man would naturally bestow upon the material side, an enquiry of that kind would really be of great benefit. I do not propose to move any amendment to the resolution, or to vote against it. I believe that such an enquiry as the noble lord proposes, if only it be conducted by men who will look at both sides of the matter and will be thoroughgoing in looking at the moral side, may be of the greatest benefit. Lord Kinnaird proposes to add something to the resolution. The noble lord seemed to deprecate the addition. I confess I do not see why it should be said such an addition will in any way interfere with the enquiry proposed. It seems to me that if your enquiry is to be of permanent value, you must extend it to the whole subject. My lords, I cannot sit down without expressing my strong sense of deep gratitude to those who have brought this matter forward. I believe they have done no more than their duty. I believe that we may safely follow their lead, if only we are careful to see that the enquiry proposed shall not be confined entirely to physical considerations, which will be dealing, not with the root of the evil, but only with the symptoms of it, and which will leave untouched that out of which the whole thing comes. If we can have an enquiry which will avoid that, I believe it will be of the greatest use. My lords, these young men who are so readily tempted to fall come often from country villages, from the artisan class in the towns. They often have not lived very excellent lives before they enlist. Nevertheless, you do not find among them anything like the mischief you are now finding in your army. And why? Because they have so much else to occupy their minds, because the moral influences around them are so much higher than the moral influences they find among their comrades when they join their regiments. They are protected by their surroundings, and soldiers are not. Look to it and see whether something may not be done, something very real, to raise the whole tone of the service in this matter. Lord Roberts pointed out to us various particulars in which he plainly aimed at that purpose. I thank him. I only wish to emphasize what he has said, and to press upon you that it is in that direction you must look if you desire to obtain permanent benefit. (Cheers.)

The Earl of Onslow said he welcomed the contribution to the debate that had just fallen from the most reverend prelate, because he gathered from his remarks that he entirely agreed in the opinion already expressed that the magnitude of the evil was such that some steps must be speedily taken to put an end if possible to so terrible an evil. But when he joined with Lord Dunraven in desiring an enquiry he himself would suggest that the time for enquiry was past and the time for action had arrived. (Hear, hear.) He hoped Lord Dunraven would not persist in his motion for two reasons—first, because he thought any exhaustive enquiry by a committee or commission might have the effect of leading some of those who were not prepared to take immediate action to point to the proceedings of the enquiry as a reason for not taking immediate action. Secondly, he hoped the motion would not be pressed, because he hardly knew in what direction it would be possible to produce more facts or figures than those already available. The amount of literature on the subject was something overwhelming. Lord Dunraven asked that an enquiry should be held into the effect of contagious disease on the forces of the Crown. Every year the Army Medical Department issued a report which dealt with the affliction of the troops from these diseases in all parts or her Majesty's dominions, whether they were Europeans, Asiatics, or Africans. Lord Dunraven desired that an enquiry should be held into the effect of the disease upon the civil population. In the course of the enquiry to which allusion had already been made he endeavoured to obtain from the principal hospitals in London and the large towns of England some information as to the proportion of these diseases to others, their influence upon others, and the increase of hereditary disease. But he found that statistics were not kept on these heads, and in many cases venereal disease was not admitted. But if the noble earl desired to find out what was the effect of the disease on the civil population he had only to ask the superintendents of workhouses or the matrons of the women's hospitals or of the sick children's hospitals, or visit, he was sorry to say, the graves in our country churchyards to be at once informed that the evil was rapidly increasing throughout the country. As to its effect on native races throughout her Majesty's dominions no fewer than five large volumes had been presented to Parliament, the result of inquiries made by governors and medical officers in all parts of the Queen's

dominions. Lord Dunraven asked for the regulations here and in other countries. The regulations in Great Britain were set forth in the report of the committee of the House of Commons in 1882, and in the enquiry he himself recently held he obtained from our Ambassadors abroad a statement of the regulations in existence in each of the European countries and also the regulations affecting the troops of those countries. If Lord Dunraven would be content with a return to that effect he would have pleasure in laying it on the Table, and he trusted that with all this information he would see that no further enquiry was necessary. He would inform the House what had been the state of affairs during the last few years in India. In 1889 a new Cantonment Act was passed in consequence of a resolution of the House of Commons in 1888. In 1892 instructions were issued by the Government of India for the strict observance of the rules under that Act. It was claimed that those rules were not strictly observed, and Lord Lansdowne, then Viceroy of India, declared that the Government of India at least had loyally carried out the resolution of the House of Commons, though local authorities might in some instances have evaded orders. In 1894 the Secretary for India ordered the introdubtion into the Viceroy's Council of a new Act to amend the Cantonments Act of 1889, and further rules eliminating this particular class of diseases from the infectious and contagious disorders, sufferers from which might be expelled from the cantonments, and imposing a fine or imprisonment on any public servant subjecting women to compulsory examination. The Government of India strongly protested against that course, and said it was necessary to have power to exclude women from the cantonments, or at any rate they must have power to exclude persons without giving a reason. But the Secretary of State was unable to agree in this view, and his sanction was refused to any rules which would have that effect. So matters remained until recently, when public attention was forcibly drawn to the alarming increase of the disease in India and its appalling consequences. Upon that the Secretary of State had written a despatch with which most members of the House would be prepared to agree, and he should like to dwell on one or two of the conditions laid down, because he believed they would go a long way to meet not only the views of Lord Roberts, but also of the Archbishop of Canterbury. The Government said they could not acquiesce in the continuance of the present state of things, and that common humanity, no less than their duty to the large body of British troops in India, demanded that some measures should be taken to restrain the prevalence of venereal disease. The despatch went on to say that there were certain things which must not be done—that was to say, there should be no approach to what had been called official purveying for immorality, and it gave power to the Government of India to expel from cantonments persons suffering from these diseases. It was quite true the result might be that there might be examination of women in some cases, but it would not be, as it was in the former case, compulsory, except in the same degree as it was now compulsory when a person suffered from smallpox, scarlet fever, or any of those diseases which the community had long since recognised to be a danger to public health. There were certain other measures which the Secretary of State had not yet prescribed, but which he had in his despatch invited advice from the Government of India upon. The first of these related to the taking of precautions to see that women were not employed about the barracks in the manner which Lord Roberts had shown had proved such a danger to the health of the soldiers. In the second place, the Secretary of State expressed to the Viceroy his desire to co-operate with him in every way in improving the moral and physical condition of the soldier. That was no new departure. For many years the Government of India and the Commander-in-Chief had been doing their best to improve the moral condition of the soldier, and no one had done more than the noble and gallant lord who had addressed their lordships, and who had not only shown himself to be an incomparable captain in leading her Majesty's forces against an Asiatic enemy, but had endeared himself to the common soldiers in India by the efforts which he had successfully made to improve their condition in all the commands he had held in that dependency. (Hear, hear.) He agreed with the most rev. prelate that there was an opening not only for chaplains, but also for the commanding officers, to take this opportunity of inculcating upon the men under their command not only—as the Secretary of State had requested—the measures for the preservation of their health, but also impressing upon them the sin and wickedness of indulging in these vices. The Secretary of State desired that the practice which was already in existence of warning young soldiers by regimental and medical officers of the risks they ran should in future be made universal. He had every reason to believe that the measures which the Secretary of State proposed to take would be efficacious, and the Viceroy had telegraphed on behalf of the Indian Government that the proposals of the Government "are in accord with our views, and, if sanctioned, will, we hope, enable us to combat successfully the spread of the disease." One other important point the despatch dealt with was the remarkable fact that in some cantonments the disease had decreased, while in others it had increased to a great extent. It was not quite clear what was the reason for that variation between different stations, but he was inclined to agree with the explanation which had been suggested by Lord Roberts. The Government of India had been asked for further information upon this point. There was no reason to believe that women in India, any more than any one else, did not desire to be treated in hospital and regain their health, and he could not see upon what ground of Christian charity they could in any way say that the prevention of disease was not one of the first duties of a Government. (Hear, hear.) But how could they cure and how could they prevent disease if that disease was concealed? (Hear, hear.) It seemed to him the only course was to treat it like all other disease and compel the immediate notification of it. Some of those who, not long ago, were most bitterly ranged against any preventive regulations now admitted that the time had arrived when something must be done. Their lordships might have observed the letter in the *Times* from Lady Henry Somerset, in which she recognised that this horrible scourge had brought upon thousands of innocent women in England a load of suffering, and said that she gladly welcomed the despatch of the Secretary of State as a statement of inspiring and controlling principles never yet professed by any previous Government. That was not an isolated instance. A memorial had been presented to the Secretary of State, and would shortly be made public, signed by a very large number of ladies of the highest position, philanthropists, nurses, superintendents and matrons of hospitals, wives of doctors and clergymen, all praying that immediate action might be taken to check the spread of this terrible disease and the ravages it was inflicting among the population at home. They stated that preventive measures, if exercised with scrupulous care, did not cause any real danger to women, but constituted a valuable safeguard to women's virtue and afforded a great opportunity of escape from a life of vice. He earnestly hoped the noble earl would not press his motion; but, whatever the result of that debate might be, her Majesty's Government felt that the time for action had arrived, and that it was necessary at once to take such steps as might seem to the Government of India and the Government in this country most likely to make a real and efficacious diminution in the disease. (Hear, hear.)

Lord Reay would like to move the adjournment of the debate if there was no objection on the part of the Government, as several noble lords were anxious to speak on the subject.

The Marquis of Lansdowne replied that the Government had no objection to the adjournment of the debate, which would be resumed as the first order on Monday.

The debate was accordingly adjourned.

HOUSE OF COMMONS.

LEAVE AND PENSION RULES.

Mr. Barnes asked the Secretary of State for India, with reference to the despatch of the Government of India dated 20th September, 1893, on the leave and pension rules of the Civil (Uncovenanted) Service, published in the Return to an Address of this House dated 11th August, 1896, full consideration would be given to the dissenting minute of Sir Alexander Miller, legal member of the Viceroy's Council:

And whether a copy of the dissenting minute, which was referred to at page 32 of the said return, could be laid upon the Table of the House.

Lord G. Hamilton: No separate dissent was recorded by Sir Alexander Miller. His views were expressed in the third

paragraph of the letter from the Government of India referred to, and were fully considered at the time by the Secretary of State in Council.

HEALTH OF BRITISH TROOPS.

Mr. STUART-WORTLEY asked the Secretary of State for India, whether he had received any representative memorials or petitions from the general public on the subject of the proposals contained in his despatch of 26th March, 1897 for improving the health of of the British troops in India; and, if so, whether he had any objection to make them public.

Lord G. HAMILTON: I have received only two memorials which can be held to be representative of general public opinion on the subject of my despatch of 26th March, 1897, regarding the health of British troops in India, and I have no objection to make them public.

A few memorials have also been received from local meetings and societies, embodying protests against the action taken by her Majesty's Government.

May 17th.

HOUSE OF LORDS.

EAST INDIA COMPANY'S OFFICERS' SUPERANNUATION BILL.

The East India Company's Office Superannuation Bill was read a third time, and passed.

REGULAR AND ELDERS' WIDOWS' FUND BILL.

The Regular and Elders' Widows' Fund Bill was read a third time, and passed.

THE HEALTH OF BRITISH TROOPS IN INDIA.

The adjourned debate on the Earl of Dunraven's resolution urging that an enquiry ought to be made into the effect of contagious diseases upon the forces of the Crown, the civil population, and the native races within her Majesty's dominions, and into the nature and results of the preventive measures which are or have been in force in this and other countries, was resumed by

Lord REAY, who said that no one who had been responsible for any part of the administration of India could fail to recognise the extreme gravity of this question. The whole tendency of modern legislation was in favour of making the public acquainted with the laws of hygiene and of enforcing hygienic conditions. They segregated lunatics, lepers, habitual drunkards; and there seemed to be no reason why the same principle should not prevail in this case. This protection of the public health was due to the fact that society acted in self-defence. The progress of medicine had placed at their disposal effectual means of dealing with this disease, and the object of the legislation contemplated in the Secretary of State's despatch seemed to him to be to diffuse these means and place them at the disposal of those who required them, and to leave no excuse to anyone not to neglect the remedies which were available. He hoped that among the first measures which would be taken would be the reopening of the hospitals, and that every inducement would be held out to make the access to those hospitals as easy as possible. Apart from the general considerations which governed this matter, there were special considerations which applied to India. In India the causes which operated in favour of restraint were not as strong as they were in this country. The factor of racial difference was a very important one to take into account, and their obligations as the ruling race could not be overlooked. From the very nature of the circumstances they were exposed in India to constant criticism of very subtle minds for everything which was left undone. In India, besides, private initiative was much weaker than it was in this country; and what was left to charitable and benevolent agencies in this country must in India be undertaken by the State; hence the Government of India undertook a great many duties and functions which in this country were left to private initiative. Another and most important aspect of this question was the moral aspect. They removed their young soldiers from those influences which surrounded their homes; they were removed to other parts of the world, to other climatic conditions, to surroundings which in many respects were not conducive to a high moral standard. He fully recognised what had been done for their benefit, but in this direction certainly more could and should be done. It was by individual effort and example that they would be able to strike at the root of this evil; and, if it was important to mitigate its results, it was certainly more important to remove the causes, to create a healthy environment, to improve the moral tone. The whole tone of society had been altered with regard to intemperance: that precedent was encouraging for those who believed that other evils might be grappled with in the same way—evils which struck at the vigour of our race. He heartily endorsed, therefore the instructions which had been given to the Government of India in the 14th paragraph of the Secretary of State's despatch. There was no antagonism between the scientific means and the moral means which could be used to cure disease. There was a double duty to be discharged by the combined forces of State agency and of moral and religious agency; and the Government of India had a perfect right to expect that in their renewed endeavours to deal with this evil they should have all the support which could be given them both here and in India to remove this frightful blot from our civilisation. He agreed with the noble earl opposite that there was no further need for enquiry. The evidence contained in the papers which had been laid on the Table seemed to him to be overwhelming; and, if anything further were necessary, he thought it was found in the advice received from the Royal Colleges of Physicians and Surgeons that immediate action was necessary. One of the conditions, if not one of the foundations, of our rule in India was moral prestige; and it was because he saw in the instructions which had been given to the Government of India by her Majesty's Govenment an endeavour to strengthen our moral prestige that he concurred in the steps which were proposed. (Hear, hear.)

LORD LISTER, on rising to address the House for the first time, was received with cheers. He said,—It is not necessary for me to add to the evidence already brought before your lordships as to the appalling gravity of the subject referred to in the resolution of the noble earl or to the tremendous importance of syphilitic disease and its far-reaching effects, not only to the person who contracts it, but to innocent women and to children in future generations. On this point I make one remark, that there is perhaps no more difficult thing for a surgeon to do than to give advice to a man when it is safe for him to enter into matrimony when he has once contracted syphilitic disease. I cordially welcome the action that has been taken by the Secretary for India in his recent despatch enacting that venereal disease shall no longer be allowed to run riot in the army in India, as it has of late years, but that it shall be dealt with on the same principle as smallpox and other contagious or infectious diseases. I confess for my part that I should have been well pleased to have waited for the regulations which I believe the authorities in India are endeavouring to make, in accordance with the despatch of the Secretary of State, to see how far those regulations might be really efficient for the great object in view; but, as the matter has been brought forward, I feel bound to say that the despatch of the Secretary of State has been hampered with the restrictions which I cannot help fearing will seriously interfere with its utility. I will only refer to two of those restrictions. It is stated that there must be no compulsory and periodical examination of women, and the despatch proceeds to say that the cantonment rules which are in operation for other contagious or infectious diseases shall come into operation as regards venereal disease. Rule 5 says that "if the medical officer for the time being in charge of a hospital is informed, on testimony which he believes to be credible, that any person living in the cantonment is suffering from cholera, typhoid, smallpox, etc., he may by notice require such person to attend at the hospital at a time to be mentioned in such notice." Then Rule 6 says: "If any person on whom any such notice as mentioned in the last preceding rule shall have been served shall refuse or neglect to attend the hospital in pursuance of such notice, he shall be deemed to be suffering from such disease as aforesaid." And then Rule 7 sets forth that on the representation of the medical officer to the cantonment magistrate that such refusal has occurred, the person concerned who has refused may be expelled from the cantonment. Now, with regard to such diseases as smallpox this regulation, of course, is perfectly satisfactory. Such a disease, and others enumerated, carry upon their face the evidence of their existence by symptoms that any medical man can at once discern. But with venereal disease the case is totally different. In the

early stages of the complaint, in which it is of the most essential consequence that it should be recognised—for efficient treatment depends upon early recognition—there is no general effect produced upon the system whatsoever. The person appears to all ordinary examination perfectly healthy, and it is only by special examination, which it is enacted shall not be compulsory, that evidence of the disease can be obtained. How can any notice be given to the medical man that a person has such a disease? Who is to give the notice? I do not understand it. In truth, it is the fact of prostitution, not evidence of the presence of venereal disease, on which the authorities must proceed. It may possibly be said that the despatch of the Secretary of State may be so construed that the mere fact of prostitution may be regarded as reasonable probability that the disease exists. If that be the construction put upon the despatch, my objection on that point would, of course, fall to the ground; but this is just one of the points on which I should like to have waited to see how the regulations could be framed. If they can be framed in the sense I have referred to, they may be so far efficacious. Then as to periodical examination. Suppose that any woman affected with venereal disease has been examined, treated and cured, after a certain time there would be just the same reason for re-examination to ascertain whether she may not be again diseased as there was in the first instance, and therefore, in order that the regulations may be effectual, there must be periodical examination. If it be said that this would be very like the introduction of the Contagious Diseases Acts, I must frankly confess that I have no objection in principle to these Acts. (Hear, hear.) It is admitted on all hands that prostitution cannot be dealt with criminally as an offence; but, on the other hand, if any woman chooses to place herself in such a position as to become a notorious source of serious danger to the community, it seems to me only reasonable that public steps should be taken to minimise such danger to the utmost. The Contagious Diseases Acts require that, in order that any woman might be subjected compulsorily to examination, a magistrate must be satisfied by sufficient evidence that she was a notorious prostitute. Of course, if there was any deficiency in the Act, not giving the woman charged the most ample chance of refuting the charge, that, of course, should be amended, but on principle there seems to me nothing to be objected to. In the Act of 1866 there was one matter which I did not like, and that was when the woman had been treated and was pronounced to be clear of the disease she received a certificate of such healthiness, which she was to carry about with her. Now that, I confess, savours pretty strongly of public licensing of immoral conduct, but in the Act of 1869 that was done away with. The certificate was no longer given to the woman, but to the police authorities, and this, surely, was perfectly right. As regards moral influences, I know as a hospital surgeon how very wholesome a moral influence residence in hospital does exert upon people of the humble and lower classes. I have often thought a severe accident might often have been a blessing in disguise to these poor people who first learnt what respect and gratitude are. For I am proud to say in the medical profession the same humane and kindly care is given to the most degraded as to the most exalted. (Cheers.) I have a very old friend whom I highly respect, a clergyman, who, at the time the Contagious Diseases Acts were in operation, knew many clergymen connected with the towns where the Acts were in force, and he tells me that without one solitary exception all those persons expressed approval of the effects of those Acts. (Cheers.) If we turn to the effects upon the disease as such, I have been told by an elderly practitioner who visited the Lock Hospital in London at a time when it was used not only for ordinary cases but also for cases under the Contagious Diseases Acts that there was the most extraordinary contrast between the two classes, as, indeed, must necessarily have been the case. The Government cases were, as a rule, very mild cases, because they had been taken in the early stages. I regret I have left behind me a letter I have received from a gentleman who has been for 14 years in practice in Brisbane in Australia, and who has now returned to England. But I may mention what its effect was. In the first place, he himself had a great objection to the Acts on the moral ground, and when he first went there he took the chair at a public meeting in opposition to the Act. The Act, however, was not abolished, and he confesses that women speak in unqualified approval of the effect of the Act in the town of Brisbane, venereal diseases in the whole community becoming immensely reduced not only in number but in virulence, so that when any virulent case occurred they were able to trace it to outside places, where the Act did not operate. His only objection to the Act is that, as he says, the women are humble, and nothing is done to deal with the men who may reinfect them. I confess that objection seems a somewhat sentimental one as regards the civil population, because, in the first place, as regards the poor women, I do not think they need complain very much of the way in which they are treated; and, in the second place, to deal with the men in the civil population on the same lines is an absolute impossibility. But, on the other hand, it is by no means impossible in the Army (hear, hear); and I was exceedingly glad to hear that Lord Roberts approved of periodical inspection of the soldiers. I can conceive no objection whatsoever to such a course; only, let it be done, not, as I am told it is sometimes done, in a sort of parade, when the young fellows seem rather to glory in having such diseases, but let every soldier be introduced, as it were, solemnly into the surgeon's room and examined on the understanding that it is a very, very serious matter. For my part, therefore, I see no objection to the Act; on the contrary, I think it was a beneficent Act, and I cannot help on this occasion expressing the hope that at no distant period it may be reintroduced into this country. (Cheers.) But, then, it is said, supposing it has worked well in this country, it is a failure in India. No doubt in India it has not done all that was expected of it. One of the reasons is the short-service system already alluded to. And to these must be added, as a most important element, the imperfect and irregular operation of the Acts. With regard to this point I have important evidence from Surgeon-General Payne, who had medical control of the working of the Acts in Calcutta from 1869 to 1879, the former year being that in which the Acts came into operation. The Cantonment Act, which was introduced in 1864, did not apply to Fort William, but to the civil population of Calcutta only, and so far acted only in an indirect way on the health of the soldiers. In a despatch to the India Office, Surgeon-General Payne writes: "The garrison of Fort William in 1872 illustrated the worst effects of a newly-arrived regiment bringing disease to those sections of the town which the soldiers frequent. At the close of 1871 the men of the 19th Foot left Calcutta, after two years' residence, almost without a case of syphilis. The head-quarters' wing of the 114th Regiment took its place, coming from Cawnpore, where the men had suffered heavily from the disease. They were not inspected on their arrival. From their arrival to the end of April there were many cases admitted into hospital. . . . By the end of April the mischief was arrested. . . . . The health of the garrison forcibly exemplified all that has been said, here and elsewhere, of the effect of the movement of troops. I had ventured to predict that the year 1873 would find the 114th Regiment as free from disease as their predecessors had become. The event fully justified the prediction, and, on the arrival of the 3rd Buffs, our former experience was utilized by the regimental authorities. There were 12 or 13 venereal cases under treatment at the time, and, at my suggestion, an inspection of the entire regiment was held. It resulted in the detection and removal to hospital of between 30 and 40 cases, and no new cases occurred for months afterwards." This seems to me to be most important evidence. (Hear, hear.) There is still further evidence given by the same authority that within the first four years during which the Act was in operation under his supervision, taking cases of primary disease originating in Calcutta, the percentage was reduced from 7 per cent. to 1·4 per cent. That is exceedingly important evidence as to what, even in India, can be done if the Acts are energetically and properly worked. (Hear, hear.) I am aware that in remote districts there may be especial difficulties; but I was pleased beyond measure to hear Lord Roberts state that, in his opinion, without anything which can be fairly construed as a direct encouragement of vice, measures might be taken in the cantonments which would have the effect of enormously diminishing the evil of which we are speaking. I trust, therefore, my lords, whether the enquiry which the noble lord has requested be instituted or not—and I confess I myself would rather see it deferred, for fear it might appear, as in the case of the Vaccination Commission, to hold out the idea that the case was not sufficiently proved—(cheers)—I trust, whether the enquiry be instituted or not, that this House will give distinct encouragement to the Government of India to persevere in the good and Christian course on which they have entered. (Cheers.)

Lord PLAYFAIR said that the speech of his distinguished friend who had just addressed the House was very important from a medical point of view. But he thought that Lord Lister did not give sufficient importance to the fact that, unless the new regulations were made sufficiently consonant with public feeling, it would be impossible, without a great struggle, to carry them into effective operation either in this country or in India. (Hear, hear.) Public opinion was now rising very much in favour of effective measures being taken to remove what was a great scandal to the nation. The evidence was perfectly conclusive as to the increase, not only in extent, but in malignancy, of the disease among our troops in India; and the public should never forget what a disease it was. It was a disease which the great specialist Ricord described as "the most terrible contagion which ever threatened mankind." It was terrible to the sufferer and to his descendants. Ordinary diseases exhausted their ill-effects on the person attacked by them; but syphilis descended to innocent children of parents tainted by it, either by direct transmission or by the degeneration of their constitution. Other diseases which followed from it on account of degeneracy of constitution had very much increased. The public should satisfy themselves on one point—it had been conclusively proved that the disease could be controlled by hygienic agencies. Those agencies had failed of recent years, because they had not been properly and efficiently carried out. The disease, in its major form, was prevented to a great extent in all the armies of European nations, while England was the only nation which allowed it to be dangerously prevalent among its soldiers, both at home and abroad. When the German army had succeeded in reducing the ratio of syphilis to $5\frac{1}{2}$ per 1,000, was it not scandalous that the English army at home should have a ratio of about 100 to the 1,000 and in India of at least 175 per 1,000? (Hear, hear.) No doubt service in an Eastern country rendered it more difficult to repress the disease; but other countries had to encounter these difficulties. The Dutch soldiers serving in the East Indies suffered from the minor forms of venereal disease to a large extent, but they kept under control the major form of the disease, which prevailed only to one-third of the extent among our British troops. The Dutch army in the East Indies formerly had a ratio of syphilitic disease among their troops of 47 in 1,000, but this had been reduced in recent years to 37 per 1,000; while the English army in India had a ratio of 175 to 1,000, and this had increased in recent years to 259 per 1,000. It was obvious that our bad administration of hygienic measures was responsible for the state of the British army in India. Racial differences, no doubt, largely influenced the susceptibility of individuals in regard to the disease; but even these could not explain why, for all forms of venereal disease, the Japanese army had the low ratio of 34 to 1,000, while the British army in India had 500 to 1,000. The United Kingdom might justly boast that since 1845 it had led the way in all sanitary reforms, and had greatly improved the health and lessened the mortality of all classes of the population. There was only this exception—that in regard to this one class of diseases, the most repulsive and horrible of all, England stood now far behind all European nations. In the report of the departmental committee the following statement was made:—"Improved sanitation has had the very greatest effect upon every disease other than venereal; this alone has not only been unchecked in recent years, but has increased to an extent which is appalling and disastrous." Up to 1887 the sanitary regulations in India, though they were inefficient to extirpate this class of diseases among our soldiers, were at least effective in preventing their increase. But in 1887 Parliament intervened, and since then the obnoxious regulations had been repealed by successive Secretaries of State for India, but no new powers had been given to the military authorities to apply more efficient sanitary measures. There was no want of knowledge as to how the disease could be prevented. There were moral means of prevention, and there were physical means, both excellent when worked in co-operation; but unfortunately they had drifted into a sharp antagonism. (Hear, hear.) The religious and moral agencies had tried to impress upon the soldier the heinousness of the sin which led to the disease. Lord Roberts had described the measures which had been adopted to remove soldiers from temptation by establishing reading rooms and regimental workshops, while various means of occupation and recreation had been furnished. Societies for promoting temperance and for repressing vice had done good work in the army. The fruit of these combined efforts were seen in the general elevation of morality in the army. Drunkenness and crime had greatly lessened among our soldiers in India. Yet all those social and moral agencies had failed to stay the increase of venereal diseases among our troops. They had failed as completely as the weakened sanitary regulations in use since 1887. The basis of all hygienic measures for preventing the spread of contagious diseases was isolation of the diseased from the healthy, and the application of curative methods to the diseased person. Parliament had in recent years enforced notification of contagious diseases such as cholera, smallpox, scarlet fever, and typhoid from the individual patient to the sanitary authority, which was empowered to see that isolation was effective, either at the home of the patient or in the hospital. This law of notification and isolation had been extended to our Army in India and prevailed in cantonments; but, though applicable to zymotic diseases generally, was no longer applied to the foul and malignant disease of syphilis. Yet it had been known for centuries that isolation was the only effective means of preventing the extension of this disease. Thus, in 1497 Edinburgh was violently attacked by syphilis, then called "grandgore," and the Privy Council of Scotland ordered the magistrates of Edinburgh to collect, on a certain day, all the diseased women, accompanied by their doctors, on the sands of Leith, where boats were provided to transport both women and doctors to the island of Inchkeith—(laughter)—and there the women had to remain until the disease was cured on pain of being branded. This was high-handed isolation, but could only be partially successful, because the diseased men do not seem to have been isolated. Compulsory isolation, as now applied by law to zymotic or filth diseases, ought still more rigorously to be applied to venereal diseases. The military authorities, in regard to venereal diseases, should at least have as full powers as those given by the Diseases Notification Act. They should therefore be enabled to discover the cases of disease and to enforce the effective isolation of the diseased. There was a fear that the active interference of the State in grappling with the evils of a dangerous immoral trade, overtly carried on among our soldiers, implied a State recognition and approval of the trade. Recognition there certainly was, but approval was not implied in making regulations for the supervision of any dangerous trades. (Hear, hear.) At one time the Church was intrusted with regulating the immoral traffic in cities, but, though that involved recognition, it did not imply approval of notorious sin. In 1430 the Bishop of Winchester was charged by Ordinance to regulate and supervise eighteen houses of bad repute which stood on Bankside, Southwark, but this involved no Episcopal approval of the immoral traffic carried on in them. The Secretary of State for India, in his despatch of March 27th, had been careful to point out how much more efficient regulations could be applied in the cantonments in India without recurring to those measures which offended the public feeling in this country. If the societies for the prevention of vice were satisfied with these assurances they might aid the authorities very much by co-operating with them in their renewed endeavours, by every form of moral and hygienic agency, to remove the national scandal of our Army being the worst in Europe in regard to those loathsome diseases. The case was urgent and admitted of no delay. But the resolution proposed by the noble lord for a new enquiry would certainly be used by the opponents of hygienic measures as a justification for further postponing the more active measures promised in the despatch of the Secretary of State for India. So far as they went they were good proposals, though they did not go far enough, but if they were effective in removing the antagonism and securing the co-operation of the religious and moral societies which acted on public opinion in 1887 and forced the military authorities to weaken their administration of the regulations, he looked with hope to this new effort of the Government. If it was met in the manly spirit of co-operation indicated in the speech of the Archbishop of Canterbury he would have great hopes of the success of the new measures indicated in the despatch. Hygienic prevention and moral prevention could well work in co-operation. He trusted that this would be the spirit which might in future prevail among the societies which arose under different conditions. At present, if he might judge from circulars which he had received in the last few days, they still seemed inclined to retain their old position of antagonism to hygienic regulations. He did not want them to alter their attitude of watchfulness;

but why should they not join their means of moral improvement with those of hygienic improvement, and help the authorities to restrain a frightful disease which was rapidly increasing in extent and malignancy among our soldiers in India? (Hear, hear.)

The Duke of Cambridge: My lords, after the able speeches which you heard on Friday night from Lord Roberts and from the noble earl who brought the subject forward, and after the admirable way it was supported to a great extent by the Primate, I am hardly justified in intruding myself on such an occasion, having no further personal responsibility with matters connected with the army. But, having been so long at the head of the army, and having had for many years the opportunity of seeing the effects that existed before all those regulations were done away with, I must entreat of you to reflect well before you come to any resolution adverse to what has been brought to your notice by the noble earl. No one can have any adequate idea of the miserable results produced by the doing away of the regulations, especially in India. But I do not take up this matter from the army point of view, though that is of the greatest importance; I take it up from the civil point of view. We must always bear in mind that a large number of young men now annually return from India; and if they return in a condition to propagate this horrible disease in the civil community at home, the misery caused is untold. (Hear, hear.) Therefore we ought to lose no time in putting a stop, if possible, to the laxity, or whatever you like to call it, with which this subject has been treated of late years, particularly in India. I have a very strong opinion also that morality would not suffer. I firmly believe, from all I have heard, that many of those poor creatures who formerly suffered, and propagated this miserable disease, absolutely gave up their immoral life as a result of the cure which they had obtained in good hospitals, and because they found that if they continued their immoral life they would become altogether outcasts of the world. The result was that they gave up this very vice which everybody wishes to see modified. I say modified, because the most rev. prelate will forgive me for saying that you must change human nature before you can get rid of the vice altogether. (Hear, hear.) I am afraid even the bench of bishops, with his lordship at their head, cannot effect that object, or any other object but the mitigation of this vice. I support most fully and entirely the views which were expressed by the most rev. prelate, but the difficulty is to find the means of effecting his object. Lord Roberts has told you, and I tell you also on the part of the whole army, that we do everything, and have done everything of late years, to facilitate and make acceptable the barrack life of the soldier. We have introduced—and the noble marquis near me will, no doubt, if he speaks, express the same view—every sort of recreation and useful occupation and interest that can ameliorate the monotony of barrack life. This has been gradually and is daily being introduced into our service, and more particularly in India, where it is more required even than at home. A great improvement in the soldiers' condition and the soldiers' sentiments has been produced as a result, and it is felt by the military authorities that the more this policy is carried out and the more we do in that direction the better. This will have a great effect, I hope, in time, in producing morality to a greater extent than it exists at this moment among her Majesty's forces. I do not believe myself that you can absolutely look forward to any very great mitigation of this miserable condition of things unless you treat the subject fully and fairly on its own merits, or, rather, I should say, its demerits. The demerits are so plain that I cannot conceive that anybody who has right or proper feeling, or delicacy of feeling, can have any doubt on that subject. I can only tell your lordships that this subject is of such enormous importance to the civil population that not a day, not an hour, should be lost in introducing stringent and decided regulations, and every effort should be made to put a stop to what is really a most miserable and cruel condition of things. Imagine the civil population infected with this miserable disease! A great many of the men who come home are, I know, very seriously diseased. You cannot control them; they go into the civil population; you do not even know what becomes of them; and then they propagate this very horrible disease. This is owing to the laxity, if I may say so, with which we have looked after our men in India. The disease can certainly be controlled in India, though it may not be easy to control it elsewhere. One of the reasons why it is not controlled as it ought to be is, I am sorry to say, that the medical inspections referred to by the noble lord are not carried out now as they used to be. (Hear, hear.) In my early days there was no sort of hesitation in regard to the matter; nobody questioned for a moment that every individual soldier should be inspected once a week. I do not see why this disease is to be treated on a different footing from smallpox or any other disease the subjects of which are immediately taken to the hospital and there dealt with. Without inspection we are not in a position to deal with this disease because we know nothing about it. Nobody of either sex would confess to such a disease unless there are means of finding out that it exists. I for one was always strongly of opinion that medical inspection was essential, not only in the interests of the army, but of the population at large. I regret, therefore, more than I can say, that I was not able to carry out those views which I personally entertained. I think we ought to lose no time in the matter. I quite agree with the noble lord that if it is found essential to go further into details it should be done, but I should hardly think it was, because I think we have details enough to satisfy any reasonable mind. (Cheers.) If there is a necessity for that, be it so, but do not on that account delay for an hour or a moment the regulations, rules, and orders which are required. If they are not found strong enough I hope there will be no hesitation in going further, even although it is distasteful I know in many quarters. It is a most fearful thing that the great population of this country should be in danger of infection and that the happiness of the generations to come should also be endangered. (Hear, hear.) It is not only to the present but to the future that we must look, and there will be much danger to future generations if something very serious is not done. I have no idea what her Majesty's Government intend to do, but I hope they mean absolutely to stick to their determination to go on with those regulations which they have already desired to carry out in India. If those are not found sufficient to mitigate the disease I hope they will go on with stronger regulations and stronger rules, progressing with caution and prudence, and without hurry, in order to reduce it in every way that is possible. In the meantime, whilst doing that, everything that can be done should be done to prevent the young men shut up in the barracks from being induced to overlook that morality which we would all like to see not only in the army, but in every portion of her Majesty's dominion. (Cheers.)

The Bishop of Southwell thought that the periodic examination of the soldiers which had been alluded to might remove one of the objections to which importance had been attached—namely, that there should be no difference of treatment between the men and the women. He suggested that where regiments had deteriorated in morality penalties should be inflicted on the colonels of the regiments personally. If those who were under him as a head-master or a bishop deteriorated, it would be quite right if he were removed from his office. He had lived in a garrison town, and he knew how much the character of a regiment depended upon its colonel. He did not believe any good would be done by further inquiry. (Hear, hear.) In India it might be possible, without moral objection, to have periodical examination insisted upon of all women engaged in the different cantonments, but he trusted the revival of the denunciation of those who had communicated disease would never be sanctioned. He appealed strongly against the revival of the Acts themselves, but he would give his hearty support to any measures of hygienic or sanitary reform.

The Marquis of Lansdowne: My lords, the action of the military authorities has been so frequently referred to during this debate that I think your lordships will expect that I should say one or two words as to the manner in which the War Department regards the proposal contained in the Secretary of State's despatch. My lords, we entirely accept the policy of the despatch, and we believe that policy is applicable to the British army not only in India, but in whatever part of the Empire it may be found. Lord Lister, in his very weighty speech just now, expressed the opinion that the new cantonment rules which might be issued under these instructions might possibly not go far enough to be effectual. That may possibly be the case, but I am able to tell him that similar laws were enforced not long ago in India, and those best able to judge anticipated for them a success which, of course, they were not permitted to achieve, because they were repealed within a few months of the date when they were first enacted.

It should be remembered that these rules rely not only on the compulsory power of detaining in hospital all women who have been ascertained to be diseased, but upon the prospect that these poor creatures, when they find hospitals are open for them, and that in those hospitals they are kindly and humanely treated, will gladly, and of their own accord, go into hospital, rather than submit to the other alternative, which, as you are aware, is that of expulsion from the cantonments. But, my lords, whether I am right or wrong as to this, I would venture to insist that in cases of this kind, profiting by our former experience of the question, we shall be wise if we lay ourselves open to the charge of lagging a little behind public opinion, rather than to the charge of going far ahead of it. (Hear, hear.) I do not propose to detain you with any reference, or, at any rate, any lengthened reference, to the statistics which have been brought forward. My lords, in this matter, statistics may be used for two purposes. They may be used in order to show that the Acts to which reference has been made were or were not successful in achieving the desired object, or, again, they may be used merely for the purpose of showing that the existing situation is so serious as urgently to demand effectual action on the part of the Government. With regard to the statistics as far as they illustrate the effect of the now repealed Acts and regulations, I readily admit that they require reading with great care and discrimination before anyone can say with absolute confidence that the case is proved by the figures, because, as has been said, the case is greatly complicated by the fact that the conditions of service in India have been greatly varied by the introduction of short service, which obviously renders the soldiers of the army much more liable to this great danger. There is another complication in the statistical view of the case, which is this—that from to time these diseases are reclassified by the medical authorities, and I have always found in all medical statistics persons are apt to be misled owing to the fact that the same ailment was described at different times under different names. Then, as Lord Roberts told you, there is a question whether these Acts were always administered in a proper and intelligent manner, or whether, as he evidently supposed, they were frequently given effect to in a very fitful and blundering fashion. I say, therefore, I have no wish to insist too much on the value of statistics in order to show the efficacy of the repealed Acts. But when we come to the value of the figures as denoting the growth and serious condition of things in the British army, I think we may say without hesitation that the case is an overwhelming one. (Cheers.) It appears not to be disputed that out of a small army of 70,000 soldiers in India in the year 1894 no less than 20,000 had been affected by the graver form of this disease ; nor is it denied that of the whole of that force only a minority of 37 per cent. had been altogether free from disease of one kind or another. These figures appear to me to constitute an overwhelming case. (Hear, hear.) I have often heard complaint that the interests of the army at home were subordinated to the interests of the army in India. My lords, we bear as cheerfully as we can the sacrifice which the home army is called upon to make for the sake of the Indian army, but I think we have a right to say it is not part of the contract that men whom we land in India, and who are the very flower of the British army, should, owing to our own neglect, come back to us withered and tainted by this horrible complaint. We haggle with the Treasury over the price of two or three battalions ; but here is an enemy which literally decimates the British army and places men *hors de combat*, not by hundreds, but by thousands. And the case is equally serious when we come to consider the injury sustained by the civil population. We have it here that of the 13,000 men who year by year come back to this country from India only abont 5,000 are altogether clean and free from diseases of this kind. There is another point which has, I think, been fairly established, and that is that the present condition of the law in India has become intolerable. I am tempted to say that the present condition of these regulations in India—regulations which, as your lordships have heard, treat this particular form of disease as privileged, as a form of disease not to be treated as other infectious and contagious diseases are—I am temped to say that the condition of these regulations is a rather instructive example of the results of dealing with important questions of this kind precipitately and under the influence of strong emotion or excitement. (Hear, hear.) I hope we shall avoid that error upon the present occasion. Your lordships probably recollect the history of this case. Some ten years ago the circular to which the right rev. prelate referred—a most improperly-worded and unfortunate circular—came to light. A great shock was given to the public mind, and thereupon a resolution of the House of Commons was passed. That resolution was peremptory in its terms, but very vague in its language. It was virtually an Act of Parliament, although it underwent none of that close discussion and detailed examination which under the practice of Parliament all Acts undergo. The Government of India endeavoured loyally to give effect to that resolution, but subsequent enquiries disclosed the fact that in many districts the local military authorities, instead of keeping carefully within the terms of the instructions which had been issued to them, to some extent disregarded those instructions. There was another outbreak of indignation at the thought that the rules which had been agreed upon, after careful discussion, between the India Office and the Government of India should be thrown into the waste-paper basket, and an Act was imposed upon Lord Elgin's Government—an Act which was, to the best of my belief either mischievous or useless, and which was greatly resented by the unofficial members of Lord Elgin's Council. I mention these things, not because I have any desire to rake up old controversies—we can occupy ourselves in a better way than that—but because I trust we shall avoid in the future the kind of mistakes which we have committed in the past. I certainly do not impute to those who differ from us anything but the most absolute honesty and sincerity of purpose. Nor, on the other hand, can I find the heart to blame very seriously those unfortunate soldiers who, desiring to shield their men from the consequences of this terrible scourge, found themselves with one foot across the very badly defined frontier which Parliament had laid down for their guidance. (Hear, hear.) The noble earl who brought this matter forward suggested to your lordships that further enquiry might be desirable. For my part I have heard with great pleasure the statement made by successive speakers that there is no occasion for such enquiry, and I trust that it will not be pressed for. As far as I am able to judge, except among a few extreme partisans, there is no difference of opinion either as to the facts or as to the direction in which we should look for a remedy. As to the state of the case outside India, there is already in the published statistics a very sufficient account of the health of the troops at the different colonial stations. The figures show that British troops suffer more than the troops of any foreign country. They also show, I think, that Lord Playfair was correct in his statement that there must be something radically wrong in the manner in which this question is dealt with in the stations abroad occupied by British troops as compared with foreign stations occupied by the troops of other countries. I will mention two cases. At Singapore compulsory examination was abolished on January 1st, 1888, and immediately afterwards 200 women left the Lock hospital in a state of disease. An enormous increase in the admission rate and "constantly sick" rate immediately commenced, and has gone on ever since. The rates of admission have about trebled since 1887. For example, in 1885, 1886, and 1887 the rates were 131, 134, and 197 per 1,000 ; since then they have varied from 400 to 600 per 1,000. The other case, to which I will refer by way of contrast, is the case of Malta. There, owing to the strenuous opposition of the local press and non-official members of the Council of Government, the repealing ordinance was rejected, and a local Act remains in force. The admission and constantly-sick rates have shown remarkable fluctuations, but in the last few years have averaged less than one-half of the rates at Gibraltar, the average of admissions being about 150 per 1,000. With regard to the home Army, we have figures for the fourteen stations where the Acts were in force, and, comparing these figures with the statistics relating to fourteen other large stations, they again appear to show conclusively that, whereas while the Acts were in force the protected stations enjoyed comparative immunity from these diseases, after the repeal of the Acts the non-protected and the protected stations became very much on a par. I have heard the suggestion that the practice followed in foreign countries might be enquired into. I doubt very much whether any enquiry into the manner in which these questions are dealt with in foreign countries would be of great advantage to us. The comparative immunity enjoyed by the armies of foreign countries is, of course, notorious; but so is the fact

that foreign armies differ in many essential particulars from the British Army, and also the fact that foreign Governments are allowed to do many things which the Government of this country would never be permitted to do. I cannot see that any comparison between an army recruited by voluntary enlistment and a conscript army, between an army recruited from many different classes of society and an army which is recruited entirely from one class of society—and that a class in which you cannot expect to find the highest level of education or the greatest self-restraint—I cannot bring myself to believe that such a comparison would really be very instructive. (Hear, hear.) I entirely agree with what was said by the right rev. prelate when he told the House that he trusted that in this country we should never introduce a system lending itself to those practices of police espionage and police restraint, which may perhaps be tolerated abroad, but which, I am convinced, the people of this country would never tolerate. I would prefer to consider what is practicable here—given the conditions of our army and the conditions of British society—rather than take a leaf out of the book of any foreign country. With regard to the despatch of the Secretary of State, I hope your lordships will observe that we do not by any means limit our proposals to the mere re-enactment of these cantonment rules. The despatch indicates very clearly the directions in which other remedies may possibly be found. Let me in particular call attention to the suggestion that a larger measure of control may be desirable over the disorderly population which frequents not only the cantonments themselves, but the country immediately adjoining cantonments. I have always heard it said, and I believe with truth, that many of the apparently unaccountable outbreaks of this disease at certain stations in India have been due, not to the intercourse of the men with the women ordinarily dwelling in the cantonments, but with vagrant, nomad people who have been hanging about the rough ground often to be found outside the limits of the station, and who in many cases have beyond all question been the means of introducing disease of the most dangerous kind into the cantonments. I am also not without suspicion that even in this country a little more vigilance might be usefully exercised over the persons who frequent barracks, and also perhaps over some of the lower public-houses and other places frequented by soldiers. But that is a matter as to which I am not yet prepared to make a positive statement. As to our dealings with the soldier himself, it has been pressed upon us by more than one speaker that we should deal equally with the two sexes. That is, so far as the limits of possibility allow it, the principle upon which the proposed practice is founded. We consider that it is our duty to prevent any person who is notoriously diseased from continuing to spread that disease, and, as a matter of fact, the soldier, if he conceals the fact that he is suffering from disease of this kind, is detained in hospital until he has recovered his health. A suggestion was made by his Royal Highness and another speaker that we should do well to revert to the old practice of periodically examining men. (Hear, hear.) I have discussed that proposal with many high authorities, and I am bound to tell your lordships that the conclusion to which I am disposed to arrive is that this practice of regular inspection did not produce the desired effect, and that it was, on the contrary, regarded, and rightly regarded, by the men as a brutalising and degrading practice. It is a practice which has gradually disappeared, and I confess that I should be extremely sorry to see it re-introduced. I need not dwell on the suggestion in the despatch that no pains should be spared in order to increase the comfort and decency of the soldier's life in barracks. As to that there is no difference of opinion. Large sums of money have been spent in India, in some measure due to the personal influence of Lord Roberts, on regimental institutes; and his Royal Highness is aware that there has been a very large expenditure at home on recreation establishments in which the men are given every facility for interesting and amusing themselves in the hope that these influences may tempt them away from the low associations in the midst of which they so often contract these diseases. I cannot resume my place without saying a word in reply to the moving appeal made an Friday to your lordships by the most reverend prelate. The most reverend prelate earnestly entreated us to approach this question not merely from the standpoint of the health and the fighting efficiency of the troops, but from the higher standpoint of religion and morality. The most reverend prelate suggested, I think, that there was a time when the military authorities cared only for the effect of immoral living on the efficiency of the men entrusted to them, that they were indifferent to immorality in itself, if they did not actually encourage it. I doubt whether there has ever been a time when you would have found an English commanding officer so cynical as to tell you that, provided his men were sound in wind and limb and able to turn out in an efficient condition for service in the field, it was a matter of indifference to him whether in their private life they were the greatest ruffians and blackguards in the world. But this I can certainly say, that at the present time there is the strongest possible feeling among the commanding officers that all pains should be taken to raise the moral tone of the men for whom they are responsible. (Hear, hear.) I cannot resist bringing to your lordships' notice one little piece of evidence in confirmation of what I have said, upon which I came almost by accident, and which I need not say was not provided with any idea that this discussion was to take place. I hold in my hand a memorandum recently issued by the general officer in command of the troops in Cape Colony. This is what General Goodenough writes:—"Sensual indulgence is a breach of the law of every religion. It is also a violation of the natural laws conducing to health. . . . It seems the clear duty of commanders in every grade to lead men to a mode of life which will enhance their self-respect and keep them from physical deterioriation; and it is to be believed that, among other means, advice, guidance and a certain amount of plain speaking, which is not derogatory and need not degenerate into coarseness, will undoubtedly have their effect in inducing by degrees a better state of things than now prevails. The General therefore wishes to enlist the aid of commanding officers and of all under them in the endeavour to raise the tone of feeling and opinion in the several commands through the exercise of this advice, guidance and plain speaking." (Hear, hear.) Those views are, I believe, the views entertained by every thoughtful commanding officer in the army. Although it is idle to suppose that we can expect all these young soldiers shall lead immaculate lives, I do sincerely hope that the result of efforts like these will be, after a while, distinctly to raise the tone of the private soldier in the British Army. Working on these lines, and supported as I trust we shall be by both sides in this discussion, I hope we shall be able to mitigate in some way the cruel suffering which the unchecked course of these terrible diseases have brought upon both the military and the civil population of these islands. (Cheers.)

The EARL OF KIMBERLEY: I was extremely glad to hear the noble marquis begin his observations by saying that it was desirable to proceed in this matter with caution; and he referred in support of that view to the history of these enactments during the past few years. It so happened that it unfortunately fell to my lot, when I was Secretary of State for India, to deal with the then state of the law in India. The noble marquis referred to the resolution passed by the House of Commons in 1888, and he said that it was not very precise. I am sorry to say that it seems to me to have been only too precise. The words of the resolution are: "Any mere suppression of measures for compulsory examination of women or for lessening and regulating prostitution in India is insufficient, and the legislation which enjoins, authorises or permits such measures ought to be repealed." That is a very distinct resolution indeed, and so it must have been felt by the noble viscount (Lord Cross), because he issued peremptory instructions that the terms of this resolution should be conformed to by the Government of India. When I returned to the India Office there was a strong remonstrance put before the Government against the state of things then prevailing in India, and it was stated that, although these instructions had been given, they had not been fully carried into effect. I felt myself then simply bound by the resolution of the House of Commons and the instructions which had been given. It was perfectly idle to suppose that we, as a Government, could have procured a reversal of that resolution. In point of fact, therefore, it remained binding upon us. It was peculiarly distasteful to me to have to deal with the matter, because I was always, in principle, in favour of stringent measures for the prevention of this horrible disease. But I conceived that I had no alternative except to loyally see that the resolution of the House of Commons, adopted as it had been by the Government, should be carried into effect. We made an inquiry, and the result was to show that the instructions given by the noble viscount had not been carried into effect. I

was greatly impressed by the fact that Lord Roberts, who naturally felt a great desire that measures should be taken effectively for repressing the disease, came to the conclusion that to a certain extent the instructions had not been followed. That was the state of things which led to the repeal of the regulations. I must confess there was one circumstance which diminished our regret, and it was the uncertainty which certainly existed as to whether the original regulations had been really successful. I do not base that on any view of my own, but upon the best authority which could possibly be quoted on the subject—namely, the Army Sanitary Commission. This Commission is a body with ample means of knowing the state of health of the army, and is a most competent body to advise on all these subjects, and it acknowledged that during the years when prostitution in cantonments was to some extent placed under restriction there was a lessening of venereal disease. And then follows this important sentence: "In fact, we pronounce the efforts to protect the men by the measures introduced for this purpose to have been failures." That was what I had before me; and naturally, seeing what had been resolved by Parliament and the extreme hostility shown to the Acts, and having a report of this kind before me, I felt much less compunction in taking the course which I felt it my duty to take as Secretary of State. This is not a question of arguing whether the regulations were or were not sufficient for the purpose; what we have before us is the simple fact that there is a frightful amount of disease in the army, and that it is our absolute duty to take any measures we can devise for diminishing such disease. That is the case before us, and it is not at all profitable to argue as to the statistics of the past, except in this way—that we must not shut our eyes to the fact that it is not merely good intentions, but that measures effective for the purpose should be devised. (Hear, hear.) I cannot help thinking, notwithstanding what we have heard from the medical authorities, that there is a real, substantial, inherent difficulty in really devising these effective measures. We must not be disappointed, therefore, if the steps now taken by the Government should not have all the effect which we should desire. If upon experience that should prove to be the case, I trust we shall not hesitate to take measures still more stringent. (Cheers.) This is not a matter which we can afford to trifle with. Differing from those who have conscientiously opposed this measure, I hold the opinion that, not only in the interests of the health of the army and of the civil population, but even of morality itself, it is our duty to endeavour to diminish this evil, because it cannot be moral to leave a terrible disease to ravage a population upon any principle or pretext whatever, if you have any means to repress it. (Cheers.) Possibly we may have to adopt means extremely distasteful, and which one would rather not have recourse to; but you have to choose between two things—either to allow the mischief to continue or to adopt whatever measures are found absolutely necessary in order to diminish, though not, perhaps, entirely to prevent it. The facts repel the view that if you take measures to prevent the disease you remove one of the strongest preventives to vice. As a matter of fact, the disease does not prevent the vice, and therefore the argument, even if you admit it, is worth nothing. The most reverend prelate insisted on the importance of taking every step to improve the morality of the soldier. Everyone will cordially concur with the most reverend prelate; but do not let us shut our eyes to the fact that the history of mankind proves that by no such means will you produce any great or far-reaching effect. I insist upon that, not from any cynical view, but because you must look facts in the face, and it is no use to imagine that you will by any means of that kind really be able to grapple with the problem. Only one word more. I think all who have heard this most interesting debate, and who hold the opinions which I imagine are generally held here with regard to the necessity for the prevention of this disease, must have seen with great satisfaction the change of feeling which has come across the country upon the subject. It is a matter, I think, of the greatest moment that you will in this respect carry the country heartily with you. (Cheers.) If the Government proceed cautiously and wisely, and if the Government of India see that nothing is done beyond the actual necessity of the case, I believe that not only will the country support the Government in the measures which it has now taken, and which I heartily hope may be themselves successful, but also in any further measures which they may find indispensable for the object in view. (Cheers.)

Lord Clarina, as one of the oldest regimental officers in the House, having had the honour to command a battalion in India as well as in the East Indies, and also one on the Home service, felt bound to say a few words. The most reverend prelate advocated as a means of promoting morality in the army an increase of married soldiers in a battalion. Presumably the most reverend prelate would not imagine that if a regiment of 1,000 strong were sent to India they could provide them with 1,000 wives and supply transport for a couple of thousand children. (Laughter.) Therefore he looked upon that as an impracticable proposition. Supposing, again, 200 soldiers were allowed to marry in each battalion what would become of the remaining 800? That plan would have no sensible effect in lessening the ravages of disease. He was amazed to hear it suggested that penal results should fall upon a commanding officer in whose regiment there was a large amount of disease. No body of men were more devoted to their duty than the commanding officers of regiments. He commanded two different battalions during his considerable service in India, and he could only say that everything in the power of a commanding officer had not only been done of late during the time Lord Roberts was in command, but that the same anxiety was shown by an equally gallant and able soldier, the late Lord Strathnairn. (Cheers.) Having regard to all that was done for the soldier in the way of libraries and the provision of reading-rooms and every sort of games, instruction in trades, and the system of regimental gardens, he was at a loss to know how moral suasion could be carried out more than had been done by officers commanding battalions. He was convinced that the new regulations would be utterly futile. He hoped that the clergy would in this matter rather follow the lead of the Primate than that of another right rev. prelate to whom the House had listened that evening. (Laughter.)

The Earl of Dunraven said that, as her Majesty's Government did not think that the enquiry which he asked for would be wise, he should withdraw his motion, though with considerable reluctance. The last thing he wished for was that action should be delayed.

The resolution was by leave withdrawn.

HOUSE OF COMMONS.

PETITION.

Restoration of Mahárájá Zalim Singh,—Petition from Jhallawar, in favour; to lie upon the Table.

THE CHITRAL MEDAL.

Mr. Buchanan asked the Under-Secretary of State for War, when the Chitral medal would be issued, and what was the cause of the delay.

Lord G. Hamilton; The Chitral medal has been struck and has for some time past been in course of distribution in India. The cause of the delay in its issue was, as I explained in this House on the 2nd of February last, the decision to strike a new medal, instead of adding a clasp to the existing frontier medal, which involved the selection and execution of a new design.

May 18th.

HOUSE OF COMMONS.

THE INDIAN MAIL CONTRACTS.

Mr. Havelock Wilson asked the Secretary to the Treasury as representing the Postmaster-General, whether the contract had been signed between the Government and the directors of the Peninsular and Oriental Steamship Company for the carriage of mails to and from India and Australia; and, if so, for what period:

And whether the Government were seeing to it that the said Peninsular and Oriental Company complied with the law as set forth in Section 210 of the Merchant Shipping Act, 1894.

Mr. Hanbury: The Postmaster-General has not yet signed the new contract with the Peninsular and Oriental Steam Navigation Company for the carriage of mails to and from India and Australia. The contract will be for seven years. The last part of the hon. member's question should be addressed to the President of the Board of Trade.

May 20th.

HOUSE OF COMMONS.

THE FAMINE INSURANCE FUND.

Mr. DILLON asked the Secretary of State for India, Would he explain under what circumstances a portion of the interest charges in connection with the Indian Midland and Bengal Nagpur Railways had now for some years been met out of the Famine Insurance Fund, in view of the fact that shortly after the creation of the Famine Insurance Fund the Government of India requested the sanction of the Secretary of State to meet certain interest charges in connection with protective railways from that fund; that Lord Cranbrook, the then Secretary of State, withheld his sanction on the ground that such a step would be a complete inversion of the object with which the fund was constituted; and that that decision was upheld by two Parliamentary Committees in 1879 and 1884 respectively.

Lord G. HAMILTON: The general policy of the Government is that to which the honourable member refers as having been supported by the Committees of 1879 and 1884, namely, that money shall be borrowed for such railways only as are likely to be so productive that the net results will cover the charge for interest on the debt incurred, and that protective railways charged on the Famine Insurance grant shall be constructed out of the revenue. In 1885, however, the Government of India found it necessary to undertake an exceptionally large scheme of railways, two of which were intended for the protection of the country against famine. The Secretary of State in Council held that the circumstances were of a special character, which could not have been contemplated by the Parliamentary Committees; and, as the Government could not themselves construct the whole of the works, and he was unwilling to delay the two urgently-needed protective lines, he authorised their construction by companies, the interest being debited against the Famine Insurance grant. When the lines came into operation, the receipts were set against the interest, and the net charge was so debited. I should add that the Indian Midland traverses some of the worst famine districts, and without its distributing power it would have been impossible to have kept the people alive in those districts during the past months.

THE "DIAMOND JUBILEE."

Sir SEYMOUR KING asked the First Commissioner of Works, whether, among the members of the Colonial Services for whom seats were to be provided to view the procession on Jubilee Day, any provision would be made for members of the Indian Civil and Military Services.

Mr. AKERS-DOUGLAS: I have promised to place at the disposal of the India Office as many seats as can fairly be allotted to that Department, and, further, to find if possible some seats for the services specially alluded to by my hon. friend. The distribution of tickets will be made by the authorities of the India Office.

"EXCHANGE COMPENSATION" ALLOWANCE.

Sir WILLIAM WEDDERBURN asked the Secretary of State for the Colonies, in view of the fact that the salaries of the European officials in Ceylon, Singapore, and Hong Kong were paid in silver currency, would he state whether any compensation allowance had been granted to them for the depreciation os silver, as had been granted by the Government of India to itf European employees.

Mr. CHAMBERLAIN: European officials in Ceylon are at present paid half their salaries at 1s. 6d. the rupee, and in Straits Settlements and Hong-kong at 3s. to the dollar.

Sir WILLIAM WEDDERBURN asked the Secretary of State for India, whether the Controller and Auditor-General to the Government of India raised any objection to the payment of compensation allowance to the forty Indian officials whose salaries were by statute fixed in rupees:

And, whether he took any steps to stop those payments and surcharged the officers concerned; if so, upon what grounds had those payments been continued for nearly four years.

Lord G. HAMILTON: Doubts as to the technical legality of the payment of exchange compensation allowance to the officers whose salaries are fixed under statute in rupees were raised, not by the Comptroller and Auditor-General himself, but on two separate occasions by two of his accounting officers. The result of the doubts thus raised was a reference by the Government of India to the Secretary of State in Council; and, as I have already informed the hon. member, the matter is still under my consideration, with a view to the procuring of further legal opinions. The payments have hitherto been made in India under the impression, confirmed by legal advice, that they were not only equitable but legal, and until the question is finally decided it is obvious that no steps of any kind can be taken.

LORD WELBY'S COMMISSION.

Mr. M. M. BHOWNAGGREE asked the First Lord of the Treasury whether there was any likelihood of the Royal Commission on the Expenditure of India completing their Report before the end of the present Session; and whether, in that case, he would give special facilities for a debate on the Report, apart from the usual discussion of the Indian Budget.

Lord G. HAMILTON, who replied, said: I am afraid there is no chance of the Report being issued in time to permit of its proper consideration by the Government before the close of the Session.

PAPER PRESENTED.

East India (Contagious Diseases) (No. 5, 1897),—Copy presented,—of Memorials addressed to the Secretary of State for India, on the subject of the Instructions contained in his Despatch of 26th March, 1897, for improving the health of British troops in India [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.